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BOMBAY BRANCH

OF THE

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# OVERTHROW

OF THE

# GERMANIC CONFEDERATION

IN 1866.

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Map of the
SEAT OF WAR.
Stettin
Stargard
Landsberg
Posen
BERLIN
Frankfort
Magdeburg
Zullichau
Kalisz
Breslau
DRESDEN
Prague
Leipzig
Cassel
Hanover
Bremen
Minden
Munster
Cologne
Coblentz
Frankfort
Treves
Mannheim
Saarlouis
Saarbruck
Strasburg
Landau
Ulm
MUNICH
Inspruck
VIENNA
Gratz
Raab
Constance
L. of Constance
Royerede
Botzen
Trent
Verona
Mantua
Venice
Chioggia
GULF OF VENICE
Trieste
Fiume
Scutari
Adrianople
Varna
Bucharest
Pesth
Comorn
Presburg
Olmutz
Pilsen
Carlsbad
Hohenstadt
Temesvar
Essek
Semlin
Belgrade
Widin
Orsova
Kalafat
Rustchuk
Silistria
Shumla
Varna
Constantinople
Adrianople
Gallipoli
Scutari
Smyrna
Rhodes
Candia
Alexandria
Cairo
Suez
Jaffa
Gaza
Damascus
Aleppo
Tripoli
Tarsus
Iconium
Erzeroum
Kutais
Tiflis
Kars
Trebizond
Sinope
Kaffa
Sea of Azoff
Taganrog
Perekop
Odessa
Kherson
Nicolaieff
Sebastopol
Simferopol
Kertch
Yenikale
Caffa
Taman
Anapa
Circassia
Georgia
Caucasus
Mt. Elbrus
Caspian Sea
Astrakan
Mozdok
Kislar
Derbent
Baku
Shemakha
Nukha
Erivan
Nakhitchevan
Persia
Tabriz
Teheran
Ispahan
Shiraz
Bushire
Bussorah
Bagdad
Mosul
Diarbekir
Orfah
Bir
Aleppo
Antioch
Alexandretta
Cyprus
Rhodes
Candia
Malta
Gibraltar
Tangier
Algiers
Tunis
Tripoli
Bona
Constantine
Oran
Mascara
Tlemcen
Fez
Mequinez
Morocco
Mogador
Tetuan
Ceuta
Tarifa
Cadiz
Seville
Gibraltar
Malaga
Granada
Cartagena
Alicante
Valencia
Barcelona
Perpignan
Toulon
Marseilles
Nice
Genoa
Leghorn
Civita Vecchia
Rome
Naples
Gaeta
Capua
Ancona
Rimini
Ravenna
Bologna
Ferrara
Modena
Parma
Milan
Turin
Alessandria
Pavia
Lodi
Brescia
Mantua
Verona
Trent
Botzen
Innspruck
Munich
Augsburg
Ulm
Stuttgart
Carlsruhe
Strasburg
Metz
Nancy
Luneville
Epinal
Belfort
Besancon
Dijon
Auxerre
Troyes
Sens
Fontainebleau
Paris
Versailles
Rouen
Dieppe
Boulogne
Calais
Dunkirk
Ostend
Bruges
Ghent
Antwerp
Brussels
Mons
Valenciennes
Lille
Arras
Amiens
Abbeville
Havre
Cherbourg
Caen
Rennes
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Nantes
Bordeaux
Rochelle
Poitiers
Tours
Orleans
Blois
Angers
Le Mans
Alencon
Evreux
Dreux
Chartres
Rheims
Soissons
Laon
Cambrai
Douai
Tournay
Ypres
Courtrai
Oudenarde
Namur
Liege
Aix la Chapelle
Cologne
Coblentz
Mayence
Worms
Manheim
Heidelberg
Carlsruhe
Rastadt
Kehl
Offenburg
Freiburg
Basle
Schaffhausen
Zurich
Lucerne
Berne
Geneva
Lausanne
Sion
Martigny
Aosta
Ivrea
Turin
Susa
Mont Cenis
Chambery
Grenoble
Lyons
Avignon
Nismes
Montpellier
Narbonne
Carcassonne
Toulouse
Montauban
Agen
Perigueux
Limoges
Angouleme
Saintes
Rochefort
Nantes
Vannes
Quimper
Brest
Morlaix
St. Malo
Cherbourg
Jersey
Guernsey
Alderney
Portsmouth
Southampton
Salisbury
Bath
Bristol
Gloucester
Worcester
Birmingham
Coventry
Leicester
Nottingham
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Chester
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Preston
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Carlisle
Penrith
Kendal
Appleby
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Newcastle
Berwick
Edinburgh
Dalkeith
Haddington
Dunbar
Leith
Stirling
Perth
Dundee
Arbroath
Montrose
Aberdeen
Banff
Elgin
Inverness
Fort George
Fort Augustus
Fort William
Oban
Glasgow
Greenock
Ayr
Dumfries
Portpatrick
Belfast
Londonderry
Donegal
Sligo
Galway
Limerick
Cork
Kinsale
Waterford
Wexford
Dublin
Drogheda
Belfast
Armagh
Enniskillen
Athlone
Kilkenny
Clonmel
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Tralee
Killarney
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Skibbereen
Youghal
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Dungarvon
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Cashel
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Gorey
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Waterford
Dungarvon
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# THE OVERTHROW

OF THE

# GERMANIC CONFEDERATION

BY PRUSSIA IN 1866.

35747

BY

SIR ALEXANDER MALET, BART. K.C.B.

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LONDON:

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# PREFACE.

PURPOSING to write the History of the War of 1866 in Germany and in Austria, the Author has recorded, in the first place, those events of which, as officially resident at Frankfort, he had more immediate knowledge.

The contest between Prussia and those members of the Germanic Confederation who sided with Austria was carried on in districts widely separated from the chief seat of warfare in Bohemia, and the double conflict was waged without concert.

This twofold action of the great drama may therefore be fairly described in two distinct narratives. Hence this volume, while detailing the causes

of the war, is confined to the history of its progress and termination in Germany. In the persuasion that this portion of the story is of sufficient interest to stand alone, the Author ventures to publish it separately, intending to complete the History by relating the events which took place in Austria.

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# INTRODUCTION.

My residence at Frankfort as British representative to the Germanic Confederation began in the month of March 1852, after previous employment for many years at other German Courts. The Frankfort mission had annexed to it the Courts of Electoral and Grand-Ducal Hesse, and Nassau. Counting twenty-five years' service in Germany alone, I necessarily gained some knowledge of national feelings and policy, and became more or less acquainted with nearly all the men of note who played any part in them. Many of the most remarkable events of 1848–9 had passed before my eyes, when, after much fruitless striving for the long-desired unification, the remnant of the national Parliament of Frankfort made its last unavailing appeals to the German people from Stuttgardt, where I was accredited; and I had seen the popular outbreak in Baden, headed by the Pole Mieroslawski, suppressed by Prussian arms, under the leadership of the present king, then Prince Royal of Prussia.

Democracy was for the time utterly crushed in Germany. Austria, also, had successfully struggled with domestic revolution, and was able to attend to her ancient German ties and the re-establishment of her imperilled interests in the Confederation.

The Diet had been restored, under the Imperial Presidency, not without efforts at parity on the part of Prussia, and much heartburning; for many of the Prussian sovereign's most patriotic subjects were bitterly mortified that his Majesty had rejected the Imperial crown of Germany, when laid at his feet by the Frankfort Assembly, and the nation felt humiliated by the triumph of Austrian policy at Olmutz in the energetic hands of Prince Felix Schwartzenburg.

On my arrival at Frankfort, therefore, I came at once in contact with the men who, in one way or another, have shaped and influenced the fate of Austria and of Germany during the fourteen years culminating in 1866.

Freiherr or (as it is usually rendered) Baron v. Bismarck had already, for nearly a year, represented Prussia in the Diet. Count Thun then filled the presidential chair, and was successively replaced by Count Rechberg, General v. Prokesch, and Baron v. Kubeck, while M. de Bismarck (as he will hereafter be called) was succeeded by M. de Sydow and Baron de Savigny.

Leading parts in the political drama which has

had such startling results were played by Count Rechberg on the side of Austria, by M. de Bismarck on that of Prussia. Having lived in familiar intercourse with both, while they were discharging the duties of their eminent posts, I attempt in the following pages to give a true record of circumstances induced, and mainly influenced by the Prussian statesman, and which have led to such momentous results.

Time has already revealed many mysteries inexplicable at the period in which the events occurred, and relieved me from the duty of silence on circumstances of which at the time I gained knowledge only from my official position, and I trust that nothing of material interest or importance will be found to have been omitted.

It is owing to the plenary liberty of unemployment, since the collapse of my post at Frankfort, in consequence of the war, that I have been able to devote myself to narrating its causes and history, and that I can speak freely of the proceedings of my own Government.

A. M.

# PRELIMINARY CHAPTER.

## THE GERMANIC CONFEDERATION.

THE Diet of Frankfort and the Germanic Confederation are constantly in scene in the earlier part of the following pages.

Experience has taught the author how little is generally known in England of that defunct assembly; and he thinks it may be opportune to give that body, to which he had the honour of being accredited up to the period of its demise, a brief elucidatory and obituary notice. Having no connection with the action of the main story, this short chapter may be passed over by those who know how the Diet was constituted, and how it originated.

They also who are careless of matters only indirectly bearing on the narrative hereafter to be set before them, may pass it by. Nor need it be studied by those who are indifferent to the right and title which the Diet had to mix itself up in affairs with which, customarily, only sovereign States are supposed competent to deal, as they touch those highest prerogatives of crowns—peace and war.

The Germanic Confederation was founded by the

Congress of Vienna in 1815, and came into existence in November of the following year. Its seat was fixed in the then free city of Frankfort, whither were sent delegates from all the States of Germany retaining sovereign rights, who formed the assembly called the Diet.

This assembly was composed of seventeen envoys, presided over by the representative of Austria. There were, however, thirty-one States, exclusive of the free cities, represented in the last period of the Diet's existence, several of the smaller States having a joint representation and vote in the Assembly, called curiæ. The Diet was thus constituted, there being one representative for each of the following votes, with certain alternations not necessary to specify.

1. Austria. 2. Prussia. 3. Bavaria. 4. The Kingdom of Saxony. 5. Hanover. 6. Wurtemburg. 7. The Grand Duchy of Baden. 8. Electorate of Hesse. 9. Grand-Ducal Hesse. 10. Denmark, for the Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg. 11. The Netherlands, for Limburg and Luxemburg. 12. The Duchies of Saxe-Meiningen, Saxe-Coburg Gotha, and Saxe-Altenburg. 13. Brunswick and Nassau. 14. The two Mecklenburgs (Schwerin and Strelitz). 15. Oldenburg, Anhalt, and the two Schwarzburgs (Rudolstadt and Sondershausen). 16. Lichtenstein, Reuss, Schaumburg Lippe, Lippe Detmold, Wal-

deck, and Hesse Homburg. 17. The free cities, Lubeck, Frankfort, Bremen, and Hamburg.*

The votes were equal. The Assembly was in permanence—that is to say, there was an annual vacation for two months, unless business was pressing. But a commission of three members sat during the vacation, with power to dispose of current affairs, and to convoke the whole Assembly in case of urgency. The sittings of the Diet were secret, ordinarily held once in the week; but extraordinary sittings could at any time be convoked by the President, or by three members concurring in a call. The voting on ordinary occasions was by simple majority of representatives present, but absent members could give their proxy. On more important occasions, such as organic changes in the constitution of the Diet itself, the Assembly resolved itself into what was called the plenum, in which a greater number of votes were assigned to the chief States, and the total number of voices was then made up to seventy. In these cases a majority of three-fourths was necessary for any question to be carried.

In theory, and by its written constitution, the Diet had very extensive jurisdiction, and all but sovereign prerogatives. It could receive and send missions

* There was a permanent military commission attached to the Diet, to which all matters concerning their profession were referred.

from and to foreign Powers, and make treaties; but practically these high attributes were greatly limited and curtailed. Foreign representatives were indeed habitually accredited to the Diet by the chief States of Europe, but the Diet itself had never any mission of its own in permanence, and only once or twice sent a representative to a conference held abroad, the most noted instances being the missions of Baron v. der Pfordten and Freiherr v. Beust, when the affairs of the Elbe Duchies were debated in the conferences held in London for that object.

No treaty was ever made by the Diet; but various conventions contracted by the several members of the Confederation with each other and with foreign States, such as treaties of extradition, postal and copyright conventions, after they had been ratified, were laid before the Diet,—not wholly as a matter of form, for when recognised by the Assembly they thereby became binding on all members of the Confederation. The greater Powers, however, jealously guarded their own exclusive rights in these matters, and were anxious that the Diet should rather serve as a court of registration than as a body having any influence in international negotiations. In one instance the omission of laying a treaty before the Diet to which the two chief German Powers were contracting parties, viz. the London Treaty of 1852, regulating the succession to the Danish crown, had grave consequences; for when the case, which had

been foreseen, arose, and it was of the utmost importance that the engagements taken by Austria and Prussia should be binding on the Confederation, the other members of that body, headed by Bavaria, declared themselves unshackled by the treaty, and acted accordingly. The case is cited in this place because it is a pregnant illustration of the Diet's importance.

Austria and Prussia having signed the treaty, could at the time have caused it to be recognised by the Diet. Their remissness on that occasion left the rest of Germany free from all obligation, and the consequences are notorious.

The leading idea with the founders of the Diet was the preservation of internal tranquillity; the next, the formation of a league, which should inspire other nations, and especially France, with respect. The first object was secured by stringent enactments, and the Diet had a right of supervision over the constitutions of the several States joined in the Confederation, which was intended to secure harmony, but which turned out a fruitful source of discord. The duty of mutual help in case of internal disturbance was rigorously provided for, and was perhaps better observed than most other prescriptions of the constitutional Act. The security afforded by the military constitution of the Diet was more apparent than real. There were yearly inspections, and occasional but rare assemblages of corps ordered

to act in tactical combination. The whole force of the Confederation numbered more than 700,000 men and over 1,200 guns, and was divided into ten army corps; but the necessary unity for efficient action was never attained during the whole period of the Diet's existence.

No doubt the whole of Germany would have been united in resistance to foreign aggression; but the tale which has to be told in the following pages will show how inadequate is theoretical organisation to the stern exigencies of actual warfare. Hence the fancied security engendered by the persuasion that enormous masses of trained men stood always ready to defend their fatherland, would in all likelihood have proved fallacious, and led to disaster.

It has been said that the Diet was not unsuccessful in maintaining internal tranquillity. It failed even in that duty, however, in 1848, and the restoration of order in Germany was due to the intervention of Prussia both in Saxony and in Baden. The Diet's orders were ignored in the fever of a revolutionary period, and the institution itself was temporarily swept away by the wave of popular discontent.

Unfortunately, the Diet was rendered unpopular by the afterthoughts of several Governments to make encroachments on those liberal institutions which some of them had granted their people after the war of liberation. Not finding sufficient compliance in their own representative bodies, they referred the

matter to the Diet, and with the aid of the two great Powers, which, though generally in rivalry, sank their differences when it was a question of repressive policy, invariably influenced the Diet to take the least liberal view of the question, and vote for stringent measures. In one instance, it is true, namely, the complicated one of the Hesse-Cassel constitution, the Diet took part against the Government of that State. But it required flagrant injustice to be perpetrated or attempted, to rouse the Assembly to any action against an established Government; and even in this case of constitutional abuses in the Electorate, the Diet was thwarted with impunity by the recalcitrant Elector and his notorious minister Hassenpflug.

It became, however, a system, when a Cabinet desired to shift the odium of an obnoxious measure from itself, to refer it to the Diet. Again, if the greater Powers thought the middle States too liberal, they led the Diet to move in the matter; and in this manner laws were enacted against association, and against the press, which seriously restricted the liberties that some of the secondary States were disposed to allow, but which were thought dangerous both by Austria and Prussia.

Another practice constantly recurring, and which gave the Diet an ill name, was allowing matters referred to its jurisdiction to drag on interminably without decision. In this respect the central organ of the Confederation earned a repute somewhat

similar to that which we Englishmen attach to our Court of Chancery.

A complaint, for instance, from an individual, or a corporate body, of injustice done by a Government, was laid before the Assembly, examined into, and referred to a committee. There it lay perhaps for years. If the matter was of grave importance, eventually a report was issued, or even two, one by the majority, one by the minority of the committee. Even then the Diet, instead of deciding, had the faculty, not unfrequently exercised, of referring the question back again, or, in certain cases, of naming what was called an Austrägal tribunal,* to take cognizance of and decide the case.

In all matters upon which the two great Powers were agreed, the Diet's proceedings were marked by the most commendable activity and promptitude; if they differed, which was far more frequently the case, the game of official delays and chicanery of all kinds was played to the utmost.

The middle and minor States made desperate but vain struggles from time to time to emancipate themselves from the tutelage in which they were held by one or other of the rival great Powers. In general, Austria was preponderant, at least with the Cabinets of the other States, popular feeling being often the other way; for it must be borne in mind that Prussia

* This was composed of three or more eminent legists—generally Professors of Law in the Universities.

represented the liberal party in the imagination of the people at large, while most of the Governments of the secondary States dreaded Prussia, knowing her desire to enlarge her boundaries at their expense. They feared no similar encroachments from the Imperial Government. Certain northern States, such as Oldenburg and the two Mecklenburgs, habitually gave their voice with Prussia; but that great Power was so often thwarted in the Diet, that it could be no matter of surprise to anyone who observed the march of events, that the destruction of a system which ordinarily gave its support to Prussia's rival in the Confederation should be resolved on at Berlin. It was indeed a necessary corollary of the great problem which M. de Bismarck undertook to solve when compassing the exclusion of Austria from taking part in German affairs.

If in this short and imperfect sketch of a no longer existing member of the European body politic my desire to be truthful has led me in any degree to violate a golden rule, and to say aught but what is laudatory of the defunct, I trust that I shall meet with indulgence, not only from the still existing though transformed parents of that offspring of many fathers—whom all treated rather as a step-child than as their legitimate progeny—but also from the yet sentient *disrupta membra* of that complex body with which I passed fourteen fully occupied years of my life in friendly intercourse.

To Frankfort Germany sent, as members of the Diet, some of its highest intellects, and association with such men was a privilege to be valued and had in remembrance.

There, too, however faulty the institution, every throb of the heart of the great Fatherland had its responsive pulsation, and nothing that passed within or without its limits, that had the slightest connection with national interests, passed unnoticed. Frankfort was a watch-tower in Central Europe, and if the sentinel whom England placed there was uninformed of anything which it concerned his own Government to know, the fault was his, and his alone.

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## *Errata.*

Page 126, *the footnote should be transferred to the second paragraph in p.* 127.

Page 209, lines 23 and 29, *for* Bremen *read* Stettin.

Page 431, line 5 from foot, *for* nine *read* three.

# THE OVERTHROW

OF THE

# GERMANIC CONFEDERATION

BY PRUSSIA IN 1866.

## CHAPTER I.

ANCIENT RIVALRY OF AUSTRIA AND PRUSSIA—ITS GROUNDS—MORE IMMEDIATE CAUSE OF RUPTURE TRACEABLE TO EVENTS OF 1863.



IN SEEKING to trace the causes which led to the open breach betwixt Austria and Prussia in 1866, it is unnecessary to revert in detail to events antecedent to the year 1863. That long-standing rivalry had existed between the two great German Powers was notorious; but few imagined, even up to the epoch fixed on as the starting-point of this record, that their rivalry would culminate in a life-and-death struggle for supremacy, terminating as it has done in the exclusion from all concern in German politics of that State which most observers considered the strongest, and which, by ancient connexion, long-established usage, and innumerable services, was thought to have indefeasible claims to the position which, from

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times almost immemorial, it had held as the imperial head and leader of the Germanic race. In that position the Congress of Vienna, by which the most recent public law of Europe was established, had fixed the Austrian Empire, with the assent of confederated Germany and the sanction of European approval. But that assemblage of European wisdom, while seeking more especially to provide for the tranquillity of Germany, reconstituted Prussia with geographical dislocations that could not be lasting, and left in the body politic then created other seeds of disruption, which, following the course of nature, have sprung up, like the dragon's teeth of Cadmus, into armed hosts set in hostile array.

The Germanic Confederation was strong for the maintenance of what its numerous sovereigns called internal order, but only theoretically safe against foreign aggression, and powerless to combine for any common cause, so long as Austria and Prussia kept up that normal position of antagonism which showed itself from the origin of the Diet, and which was the inevitable result of their relative positions in the Confederation. Reflecting men, therefore, soon discovered that Germany was of small account in the Councils of Europe, that constitutional liberties were sparingly and grudgingly given, and that the Diet itself was habitually used as an instrument of oppression whenever any one of the Governments of which it was composed wished to shift the odium of

arbitrary measures from its own shoulders.* From such causes sprung the discontent of the people—often expressed—but never so loudly as in 1848–9 when the popular outbreak for a time overawed and held the governing powers in check. Yet, even then, German democracy sought a return to order, and to attain the grand object of national union, under the ancient form of imperial rule; and it seems probable that, if the conscientious scruples of the Prussian sovereign had not withheld him from grasping the proffered sceptre, a state of things might then have been peaceably established obviating most of those complications which have since arisen. These complications have found their solution in the fratricidal struggle which has destroyed many ancient landmarks, and which, though it may have paved the way to eventual German unity, has not only left the work unfinished, but has imposed on nearly all the rest of Europe the still subsisting intolerable burthen of an armed peace.

Of this struggle I purpose to relate the history; and the first portion of my task is to examine more closely the recent manifestations of that ancient rivalry between Austria and Prussia which, dating from their first association in the Germanic Confederation, led to the trial of strength which Europe

* The laws against the press and against public associations may be specially instanced.

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has so recently witnessed, and to such momentous and unexpected results.

The year 1863 saw that meeting of German sovereigns at Frankfort which was convoked by the Emperor of Austria to deliberate on the reform of the Federal Union.

It would be out of place here to relate at any length the occurrences of that meeting, which came indeed to nothing, being rendered abortive by the absolute refusal of the King of Prussia to take part in the deliberations of his brother sovereigns.

The Emperor of Austria was attended at Frankfort by Count Rechberg; M. de Bismarck was at the same period adviser of his King and his Minister of Foreign Affairs. It is well known that, when the two sovereigns had previously met at Gastein, the King of Prussia, while away from his able adviser, did not absolutely reject the project of the Frankfort Congress which Francis Joseph then laid before him. When, however, the scheme was realised, the King had returned to Berlin, and the influence of his minister sufficed to deter His Majesty from going to Frankfort, though King John of Saxony had been personally delegated by the Congress to endeavour to induce a change of resolution.

It is more than probable that M. de Bismarck resolved at this time to try the realisation of his long-formed project of excluding Austria from all participation in German affairs. Events which closely

followed each other in other parts of Europe, adroitly turned to account, eventually enabled him to execute schemes which, though he had long been known to entertain them, were regarded as chimerical by those who were most acquainted with the means at his disposal, and best able to calculate chances.* CHAP. I.

Count Rechberg, however, better than most men, was aware of M. de Bismarck's designs, and knew the extent of his ambition. These two statesmen had been long associated, the one as President of the Diet, the other as Prussia's envoy to that body; and M. de Bismarck's frank declarations left no one in ignorance of his aims and aspirations. Least of all men could Count Rechberg be blind to them, or to the fact that his Prussian colleague strongly and consistently gave utterance to and maintained the opinion that Austria's political views ought only to be turned in an eastern direction, and that her intervention in the affairs of Germany was misplaced and unnatural. It seems, then, in the nature of a fatality that the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs should ever have allowed himself to enter on any such compact as that which, not long after the Frankfort Congress, it is known that he concluded with the statesman whose enmity to his country was the world's secret. M. de Bismarck shook the red flag of democratic revolution in the face of the

* *Vide* Appendix, No. I.

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Imperial Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the phantasm was alarming enough, in Count Rechberg's eyes, to induce him to grasp as friendly the hand that was prepared and destined to inflict deep humiliation on himself and on the country he served.

Count Rechberg retired from the direction of the foreign policy of Austria at an early period of the difference between the Imperial Government and Prussia, but not before he had had time to exercise very considerable influence on the course of events.

Descended from an ancient Suabian house, Count Rechberg inherited the good qualities with some of the defects of his race. He was fertile in expedients and tenacious of purpose, but excitable and impatient of opposition, and, rather than seek arrangement by compromise in matters he disapproved, would resort to any expedient for delay.

More liberal at heart than in practice, Count Rechberg has added another to the many instances which prove that the associations of a life are scarcely ever overcome when bound up with the memories of early kindness and mutual friendship. Thus he remained during his whole career personally devoted to Prince Metternich, and a faithful disciple of his political school. Had he been unshackled by those past memories, he would have shown himself capable of admitting principles of a bolder and more liberal policy. As it was, he could not bring himself to march with the spirit of the day, and, though taking

active part in the affairs of his country during the trying epochs of domestic trouble in 1848–9, and during the Hungarian and Franco-Italian wars, he had not been sufficiently schooled by political adversity to divest his mind of too implicit confidence in the traditional excellences of the Austrian system of government. Thus, by resolutely setting his face against all change, his Excellency unwittingly became the abettor of that most astonishing of all revolutions which ended by excluding the great empire he served from connexion with Germany.

His faith in the stability of Austrian influence in Germany, and in the system on which that influence rested, was unlimited; and holding by Austria's pre-eminence as a principle that admitted no dispute, he certainly at times made parade of this position in a manner that was deeply resented by his Prussian colleague in the Diet. There is indeed little doubt that the earliest aspirations of M. de Bismarck, when chosen by his sovereign to represent Prussia in the Diet, were limited to establishing parity between the two great German Powers, and that he would have been well satisfied with alternation in the presidency of the Diet, and such a division of influence in the Confederation as that nominal equality would have carried with it. When, however, the Prussian statesman found that Austria would abate no iota of her pretensions, and that her influence in the Diet was generally preponderant;

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when, further, his clear insight into the future saw only one mode of attaining his ends, and that the destinies his patriotism conceived for his own country could no otherwise be accomplished than by the humiliation of her rival, he at once threw himself into the task with all the energy of his nature.

M. de Bismarck's whole soul glowed with the passionate resolve to expel Austria from Germany. It was not in his character to hesitate as to means; and neither moral nor material obstacles diverted him from his object. In fact, he entered on the contest unencumbered by scruples of any kind. To raise Prussia to the political status which he thought his country ought to hold, was his religion. He entered the path of action with the fervour of a Mahomet inforcing a novel faith, and, like Mahomet, he succeeded.

## CHAPTER II.

PROPOSED CONGRESS OF PARIS—DEATH OF KING OF DENMARK—GERMAN AGITATION—FEDERAL EXECUTION IN HOLSTEIN—M. DE BISMARCK INDUCES AUSTRIA TO JOIN PRUSSIA IN OCCUPYING THE DUCHIES—INVASION OF SCHLESWIG AND JUTLAND—CONFERENCE OF LONDON AND ITS FAILURE.



THE assembly of sovereigns at Frankfort had no other immediate serious result than to render the relations of the two great German Powers less friendly, and the proof that had been given of the influence of Austria in the Confederation served to confirm M. de Bismarck in his predetermined scheme of making it impossible for the Imperial Government to interfere in German affairs, and this at the very time when the star of Austria was most in the ascendant. There are, in fact, good grounds for believing that from this epoch his Excellency began seriously to prepare the means which subsequently proved effective for attaining his ends. The reorganisation of the Prussian army was vigorously pushed on under his initiative, and his conflict with the Chambers was maintained more for the support of the measures confided to the able management of General von Roon, the Minister of War, than for any other purpose.

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Events in the rest of Europe singularly favoured M. de Bismarck's policy, by diverting attention from the very grave nature of the constitutional struggle in which he had been so long engaged with the national representatives.

France was offended by the lukewarm conduct of Austria in the Polish question, and the proposal of a general Congress, put forward by the Emperor of the French, occupied for a season the attention of all the States of Europe. The refusal of Austria to take part in that Congress, from the fear that her position in Italy should be canvassed, still farther alienated the two Imperial Governments.

To the simultaneous rejection of the French Emperor's scheme by the British Government may reasonably be ascribed that coolness which subsequently frustrated any chance of common action by Great Britain and France, when their good understanding would have stayed the dismemberment of Denmark, which was the next great event in preparation.

The death of the King of Denmark—an event which could hardly have happened at a more inopportune crisis—at once caused a ferment in Germany which, with all his firmness and resolution, M. de Bismarck found himself unable to stem. His policy was utterly opposed to allowing the wrongs of the German people of Holstein and Schleswig to be righted by the process called execu-

tion, which implied occupation of the Duchies by Federal authority, and by Federal troops commanded by a general appointed by the Diet; yet the Prussian minister found it expedient to yield for a time to the popular movement, and to allow the Diet of Frankfort to decree the military occupation of Holstein, and eventually of part of Schleswig, the troops of Hanover and Saxony being selected to perform that duty.

In this conjuncture, a considerable part was played by the Bavarian representative at the Diet, Baron v. der Pfordten. His Excellency had been an eminent legist and professor of civil law, and to him was confided the duty of reporting on the public law of the questions in dispute between Germany and Denmark, and the right of succession to the sovereignty of the Elbe Duchies, consequent on the death of the Danish sovereign. By some diplomatic negligence, or calculated omission, on the part of the two great German Powers, the Treaty of London of 1852, regulating the succession to the Danish throne, had never been presented to the Diet, and was of course unacknowledged by the Confederation.* Baron v. der Pfordten consequently drew up a report, ignoring that treaty altogether, and laying down the law with a strong tincture of animosity and personal feeling.

* This omission was always ascribed to Denmark. But if either Austria or Prussia had laid it before the Diet, there can be no doubt that they could have secured its general acknowledgment.

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The interference of the Diet, therefore, in Holstein was made to extend to the establishment of a right of succession, which was to sever the sovereignty of that Duchy at least, if not of Schleswig, from the Danish crown. In propounding these doctrines, the Bavarian minister was only the echo of the prevailing public opinion of Germany, which, at the time, was excited against Denmark to a degree that made the whole nation deaf to any argument in opposition to the popular passion. Baron v. der Pfordten was probably persuaded of the abstract justice of the cause he so warmly espoused, but he gratified at the same time a sentiment of dislike conceived against Austria, dating from the meeting of sovereigns in 1863, when, in his opinion, the part assigned to Bavaria was not altogether compatible with the dignity and importance of the first among the secondary States of the great German Fatherland. On this occasion the Bavarian minister certainly enjoyed the mortification which both Austria and Prussia were at no pains to conceal, at the temporary triumph of the vigorous democratic energies of all the minor States acting in unison, and actually emancipating themselves under his guidance from the tutelage of the two most powerful members of the Confederation. The name of Baron v. der Pfordten was for a brief season one of the most popular in Germany. Backed by the national enthusiasm of the moment, he had forced the hands

of M. de Bismarck, and compelled Austria to give way to popular outcry.

His triumph, however, was but of brief duration, and it ceased as soon as M. de Bismarck persuaded the Austrian Cabinet that it was the interest of the two great Powers to unite for the purpose of putting a curb on democratic tendencies. Austria, fatally blind to her own interest, entered into the Prussian premier's combinations; and, as a consequence, the semblance of an independent exercise of authority, by any conceivable concert of the middle States, vanished like a dream.

The occupation of Holstein was primarily effected without hostile collision with the troops of Denmark; but an event took place which M. de Bismarck had most wished to prevent, viz., the acclamation of the hereditary Prince of Augustenburg as Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, under the ægis of the Federal occupation.

In this crisis, the ability and resources of the Prussian premier speedily made him master of the situation, and his Excellency effected this in a manner that at once served a threefold purpose. By inducing Austria to participate in the invasion of Denmark (for that was the real intent of the joint operation), not only did the Imperial Government take its full share of the odium attaching to the proceeding in Germany, and in all the rest of Europe, but M. de Bismarck made use of the rival Power to

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aid him in gaining a territorial acquisition which he had predetermined to secure for Prussia, and, at the same time, made it possible for him to put Austria in the wrong before the European tribunal, in the quarrel which he was contriving to fix upon her.

A guarantee given by Prussia of the integrity of the possessions of Austria, in the event of a war arising from her co-operation with Prussia, was one of the inducements which led Count Rechberg to engage his country in this overweening exercise of power; but his fear of democratic influence, which the Austrian statesman most dreaded, had probably the greatest weight in inducing the Imperial minister to enter into such a fatal combination. From it speedily resulted the war disastrous to overmatched Denmark, the overrunning of Schleswig, the invasion of Jutland, and the bloodshed resulting from the vain but heroic resistance of the Danes in the trenches of Düppel, of Alsen, and elsewhere. At this crisis, the tardy proposal of Great Britain for a conference had indeed been accepted, but it scarcely admits of a doubt that the Prussian envoy sent to attend it had his instructions to prevent a useful result. M. de Bismarck was previously well assured of the indifference of France, and could rely with confidence on the Emperor's declared opinion of the nullity of the Treaty of 1852. He was equally well assured that the advisers of the crown in England would in all likelihood do no otherwise,

in case the conference failed, than tender more of those excellent counsels of which, in the opinion of continental statesmen, Her Majesty's Government had been far too lavish.* The Prussian minister, therefore, pursued an undeviating course, never abandoning the track he conceived best calculated for securing his great object of getting possession of the Duchies and of Lauenburg for his own country; he shrank from no obstacles, and was deterred, as the world will most likely think, by few scruples.

His Excellency had made public declaration in the Prussian Chambers and in the Diet, that Prussia held herself bound by the Treaty of 1852—provided Denmark fulfilled its stipulations. He had in like manner left it to be inferred, in his replies to remonstrances from some of the foreign envoys at Berlin before the Federal occupation took place, that certain concessions on the part of Denmark would obviate all difficulties, and might arrest the menaced operations.

This semblance of moderation, it was soon seen, was put on to serve the purpose of the hour, but the moment a change of policy became convenient the cloak was thrown aside.

His Excellency acted in a similar spirit as regarded

* See Chap. V. and Appendix. The author was one day told by Baron v. der Pfordten that '*he looked on Earl Russell's despatches as so much waste paper.*' The author required and received an ample apology for the disrespectful phrase, but the hasty expression was not the less sincere.

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the memorable declaration delivered by Count Bernstorff in the London Conference on May 28, in favour of those rights of the Prince of Augustenburg which Prussia speedily found it convenient to ignore.

Not only, then, had the redress of German wrongs in Holstein been effected, in spite of the gallant, but ineffectual, struggle of overmatched Denmark; but pretexts had been found for further spoliation, and for wresting from her Schleswig and Lauenburg. Jutland also had been invaded. These acts were accomplished by high-handed power, and acquiesced in by the rest of Europe with an apathy and indifference not to be explained in the eyes of statesmen, even by the temporary mistrust existing between England and France on account of our rejection of the European Congress; excusable perhaps on the part of Russia by the burthen of gratitude imposed on her by the all but active assistance which Prussia had recently given to her in suppressing the Polish insurrection, but violations of principle regretted by true patriots of every colour.*

* M. de Bismarck had tried to persuade the British Government that the secret treaty, signed on behalf of Prussia at St. Petersburg, by General von Alvensleben, for suppression of the Polish rebellion, would remain a dead letter!

## CHAPTER III.

CESSION OF DUCHIES BY DENMARK—THEIR MILITARY OCCUPATION AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT—BEGINNING OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN AUSTRIA AND PRUSSIA—INTERCHANGE OF DESPATCHES.

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We now come to the Treaty of Vienna, of October 30, 1864, by which Lauenburg, Holstein, and Schleswig were formally ceded by Denmark to the two conquering Powers. It is noteworthy that, before the invasion, no precise stipulations had taken place between Austria and Prussia as to the disposal of the conquests which they might safely reckon upon making. This was another grave fault on the part of Austria, and most probably a calculated omission on the side of her Prussian ally. Article III. of the Treaty of Vienna, of October 30, 1864, says textually, 'His Majesty the King of Denmark renounces all his rights to the Duchies of Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg in favour of their Majesties the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia, and binds himself to recognise such dispositions as their said Majesties establish in respect of those Duchies.'

So far, therefore, as the text of that treaty goes, the

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condominate rights of the two sovereigns in whose favour the cession was made were equal.

Let us now examine the only authentic document which has come to light in the nature of a public act between Austria and Prussia, anterior to the invasion, relating to this subject, extracted from the account of the War of 1866, published in 1868 by the Austrian General Staff's Bureau.

The Convention of January 16, 1864–5, contains the following paragraph concerning this matter, which formed the treaty basis of all subsequent relations between Austria and Prussia :—

'In case of coming to hostilities in Schleswig, and the existing treaty engagements between the German Powers and Denmark falling asunder, the Courts of Austria and Prussia engage to establish the future condition of the Duchies only by way of mutual understanding.

'The case arising, they will enter into special negotiation in order to arrive at this understanding.'

The occupation of the conquered territory was in the first instance thus arranged. There remained in the Duchies one brigade of Austrians, consisting of five battalions of infantry, two squadrons of cavalry, with one battery of artillery, under Major-General v. Kalik; while Prussia left two brigades of infantry, amounting to eighteen battalions, one brigade of cavalry of eighteen squadrons, and three batteries of artillery.

The Federal contingent, consisting of Hanoverians and Saxons, was withdrawn by a Dietal decree.

Commissioners from both Governments were named: Von Lederer—speedily succeeded by Baron Halbhuber—for Austria, and M. de Zedlitz for Prussia. The government was to be in common, and its seat the city of Schleswig.

Count Rechberg meanwhile had retired from the post of Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs, shortly after the signature of the Treaty of Peace of Vienna, and had been replaced by Count Mensdorff Pouilly.

That the inheritance left by Count Rechberg to his successor was one of enormous difficulty became speedily evident.

The first dissidence between the two Governments declared itself in respect of the right of succession to the ducal sovereignty of the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein being vested in the Hereditary Prince of Augustenburg, as recognised by the joint declaration of Austria and Prussia (already referred to) in the London Conference. That declaration was to the effect that his Highness had the best title to the succession in the eyes of Germany, and would infallibly receive a majority of the votes of the population of the Duchies.

While, then, the Imperial Government faithfully adhered to that declaration, it was unhesitatingly set aside by M. de Bismarck, in pursuance of his secret resolve to annex the Elbe Duchies. It is true

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that a claim had meanwhile been put forward by the Duke of Oldenburg; but so resolved was the Prussian premier to keep the decision in his own hands, that when, in the sitting of the Diet of December 5, 1864, a proposition was made to regulate the succession by the sole authority of the Diet, his Excellency made this declaration to the Courts of Saxony and Munich, dated December 13:—

'That if this proposition was adopted by the Diet, the political independence of Prussia would be imperilled, and Prussia would thereby find herself compelled to make use of her freedom of action in defence of her rights, in consequence of the violation of treaties by an illegally adopted decision.'

A simultaneous communication was made to Austria, to the effect that Austria could not give her judgment on the question of the succession in the Duchies until her own position in relation to the future State had been accurately defined. The proposition relating to the Prince of Augustenburg could not be admitted, as such an act would prejudice the pretensions of other claimants, and be ill-received by the Courts of Hanover, Oldenburg, and Russia. It was further maintained that the annexation of the Duchies to Prussia, though not to be carried out except with the assent of Austria, would be highly advantageous to German interests, and not detrimental to those of Austria.

Count Mensdorff's reply to this despatch was thus worded:—

'Austria had undertaken the matter, and desired 'to find its solution in the interest of Germany.

'Hanover put forward opinions, but made no claim; 'the Austrian Cabinet would examine the claims of 'Oldenburg. Prussia, moreover, had recently de- 'clared that she would regard the decision of the 'Diet as final. If Prussia had meant to make claims 'of inheritance to the Duchies, she ought to have 'brought them forward before giving the declaration 'of May 28, in the London Conference, in common 'with Austria. Austria would only assent to the 'incorporation of the Duchies with Prussia upon an 'equivalent augmentation of her own German terri- 'tory being guaranteed to her. Austrian blood had 'not been shed for the sake of disturbing the balance 'of power between the two great German States by 'one-sided aggrandisement.'

It was subsequent to this interchange of despatches with the Imperial Chancery of State that M. de Bismarck referred to the law advisers of the Prussian crown the whole question of the pretensions to the succession in the Duchies. Their inquiry was to embrace all other claims, as well as those which Prussia derived from ancient hereditary Brandenburg rights and from the recent Treaty of Peace of Vienna.

## CHAPTER IV.

### CONSIDERATIONS ON THE CONDUCT OF THE EUROPEAN POWERS WITH REFERENCE TO THE SPOLIATION OF DENMARK.

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LET us here leave for a while the narrative of the course taken in the controversy over the spoils of Denmark. The treatment of that State was an iniquity destined to bring speedy Nemesis on one of the Powers that participated in the act, and some brief examination may well be given to the questions arising from the conduct of the other Powers of Europe, in passively looking on while an important second-rate State was overrun and humiliated by the combined action of two of the most powerful members of the European body politic.

The simple question of right is one that admits of no discussion. The title of Germany to interfere between Denmark and the Federal Duchy of Holstein, a member of the Confederation, cannot be contested; nor can the Danish Government be acquitted of certain harsh and imprudent measures, persevered in against repeated friendly remonstrances,* till they

* *Vide* Chap. II. p. 11.

justified forcible interference on the part of the Germanic Confederation.

The limits and extent, however, of that interference were clearly defined and fixed by the Federal compact; and when Austria and Prussia took the measure of Federal execution out of the hands of the Diet, and converted the operation into hostile occupation, the public law of Europe, as established by the Treaties of Vienna, suffered one more of those breaches, which could no more be patched up by empty protests than the annexation of Cracow by Austria, or of Nice and Savoy by France.

But what were the interests involved in the maintenance of Denmark in its integrity? and what were the duties incumbent on those States whose interests were affected, in preventing any such attack as that to which Denmark became so wrongfully exposed? Which were the States most interested? and why did they hang back from making any exertion in the cause of right?

The reply to the first question is, that Denmark held the keys of the Baltic; that, although hardly strong enough of herself to keep the portal shut under all circumstances, it was of vast importance to the other maritime Powers of Europe that the faculty of so doing should be in hands neither so mighty as to abuse the trust, nor so weak as to be at the mercy of the first burglar who sought to force the barrier. Those conditions Denmark fulfilled; yet her enemies

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have been suffered to reduce her to a condition very seriously impairing her ability longer to discharge the office of janitor. What prospect, it may be asked, would she now have of resisting Prussia alone? or what might happen to the rest of Europe, if Prussia and Russia combined to close the Baltic to their commerce and to their men-of-war?

The second query will be at once answered by asserting that, by the public law of Europe, as established by the treaties of 1815, it was the duty of the States interested to resist all measures calculated to bring on such a state of things, by all the means at their disposal, and at all hazards.

It may be safely affirmed that the duty could have been discharged at small risk; and in making this assertion, it is only necessary to say, in reply to the third query, that England and France, as the principal maritime Powers, were the States peculiarly interested in the maintenance of Denmark's integrity. Had either of those Powers, or still more had they conjointly, said to Austria and Prussia, in firm language, that their attack on Denmark was a direct violation of public European law and could not be permitted, Austria would have been only too happy to find so plausible a pretext for extricating herself from a false position.* Prussia would not have ventured to break with all her

* See various reports of Lord Bloomfield's conversations with Count Rechberg in Chap. V., and in Appendix.

confederates, by taking the matter into her sole hands, to say nothing of risking a war with England and France, or with either of them separately. The execution decreed by the Diet would have followed its normal course; that is to say, the occupation of Holstein, and probably of the Germanised portion of Schleswig, would have been carried out peaceably, for Denmark would have been inhibited from offering armed resistance, unless the recognised right of interference on the part of the Germanic Confederation had been overpassed. Further, the pressure of the same Powers which restrained the separate action of Austria and Prussia, would have been effectively used to induce Denmark to make such reasonable concessions as should satisfy the demands of Germany, and the *status quo ante* would, within a reasonable time, have been undoubtedly re-established, without further disturbance of the Treaties of Vienna, and the peace of Europe.

Why, then, did Great Britain and France permit this violation of right—a beginning of evil fraught with consequences of grave importance not only to themselves, but more especially to Austria, and of the most pernicious example for the future?

England, only feebly stirred by her recent dynastic connexion with the Royal House of Denmark, was under the influence of those peace-at-any-price principles which a certain class of politicians still think

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most to her advantage, and suitable to her insular position.

Her diplomatic agents at the foreign Courts, in the remotest degree interested in the question, were, it is true, sedulously charged to tender the earnest counsels and most serious warnings of Her Majesty's Government against the purposed action of Austria and Prussia; nay, there were not wanting insinuations that, in certain contingencies, England might feel herself forced to depart from her passive attitude, as will clearly be shown in the next chapter.

Those, however, to whom this advice was tendered and these remonstrances addressed, knew the precise value to be attached to them, and treated the cajolery and the menaces of the British Cabinet with equal disregard.

When the Conference, too tardily brought together, met in London, France took part in it, under influence of the resentful feeling created in the Imperial mind by our rejection of the Emperor's scheme of an European Congress in 1863. Austria, there is good reason to believe, was the one foreign State besides Denmark, represented in the meeting, that was not thoroughly averse to the whole proceeding; while Prussia, and the representative of the Diet, entered into the discussion predetermined to defeat its ostensible objects of bringing about a pacific arrangement, save on inadmissible conditions.

It has been said that the *status* to which Denmark has been reduced, and the consequences which have

followed thereupon, are of the gravest importance to England as well as to France.

Materially speaking, it cannot be affirmed that British interests were directly imperilled, or that they have as yet received apparent injury; but history will have to decide how far the character of England was upheld by the statesmen who governed the country at the time, and whether moral influence is to be entirely disregarded in public policy. It is not to be doubted that her utter desertion of Denmark lowered her national reputation, and left a stigma of egotism on the nation.

Posterity will judge the capacity of those who left it to future generations to repair neglect of so grave a nature.

France—Imperial France—was morally bound, perhaps even more than England, to hold out a protecting hand to Denmark. The recollection of the fidelity of the Danes to their engagements to the First Napoleon, and the terrible sufferings entailed on the northern kingdom by that fidelity, should never have been passed over, as though no tie existed, but ought to have outweighed all other considerations.

There exists, however, a very general persuasion, that M. de Bismarck had already found means to influence the Imperial mind. It has been surmised that his own schemes of aggrandisement for Prussia, at the expense both of Denmark and of Germany, had been more than hinted at, and that visions of possible

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territorial advantages to accrue to France may have been held out to the Emperor, and entertained by him, in case Prussia was left free to pursue her own course without interruption. To reasons such as these, it is imagined, may in great measure be ascribed the quiescent attitude taken by the Imperial Government in this question.

It is certain that resentment at the abrupt and decided rejection, by the British Government, of His Imperial Majesty's proposition for a general European Congress in 1863, caused the Emperor to regard with little favour the more restricted assemblage of diplomatists which the British Government convoked in 1864, with the special object of regulating Danish affairs.

The Imperial declaration that the Treaty of London of 1852, regulating the succession to the Danish throne, was an impotent work (*une œuvre impuissante*), was almost as important, in the conjuncture in which it was pronounced, as His Imperial Majesty's well-known phrase in his speech at Auxerre, 'that the Treaties of 1815 had ceased to exist.'

Be this as it may, there is no sort of doubt that the proposal of M. de Latour (the French representative) in the Conference, to take the votes of the people of the Duchies, as the only way of settling the quarrel, alarmed Austria as to the application of a similar process to Venetia, and thus tended finally to bring the London Conference to an end without result. To France, therefore, in at least an

equal degree with England, is attributable the spoliation of Denmark; and France has found, to her heavy cost and detriment, that the abandonment of principle brings retribution. At all events, the aggrandisement of Prussia, which the ruler of France may well have hoped to see effected only concurrently with accessions of neighbouring territory to France, has been accomplished without his realising any of those advantages; and His Imperial Majesty has had to keep up the semblance of calm content under great provocations, to increase his armaments, and keep a jealous watch on his powerful neighbour.

Russia had also no small interest in desiring that Denmark should not be weakened; but her obligations to Prussia for the more than passive assistance given her by that Power during the late Polish insurrection, and her fears for the future completely tied her hands.

Thus was accomplished, to the reproach of all Europe, and in violation of public law and principle, an act of high-handed violence and spoliation which the judgment of history will class as only secondary to the partition of Poland.

The part which England played in this drama was considerable enough to merit special attention, and the narrative of events will not be unprofitably interrupted by a chapter exclusively devoted to recording our diplomatic intervention.*

* Good reasons exist for the belief that Sweden would have joined in any active measures of assistance to Denmark.

# CHAPTER V.

## BRITISH DIPLOMACY IN THE DANISH QUESTION.

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THE object of this chapter is to enable the public to form its own judgment as to the correctness of the assumptions hazarded in that which precedes it—that England's desertion of Denmark 'lowered our national reputation, and left a stigma of egotism on the nation.' To reproduce a tithe of what was written on the subject is not within the scope of a work like this; but the author desires to enable his readers to pass in review certain salient points of the negotiations wherein the British Cabinet interfered between the Northern Power and Germany—and interfered in vain—and to form their own opinion.

The documents are wholly extracted from the papers laid before Parliament in 1864. We may begin with one of Earl Russell's earliest despatches on the subject, addressed to the author.

(No. 77.)* *Earl Russell to Sir A. Malet.*

(*Extract.*)

Foreign Office, June 9, 1863.

I have received and laid before the Queen your despatch reporting that you had read to the President of the

* The numbers are those of the Blue Book, and are given for the sake of reference, if required.

Diet my identic despatch to Lord Bloomfield and Sir A. Buchanan, deprecating a Federal execution in Holstein.*

If the President of the Diet wishes it, his Excellency may have a copy of my despatch in question.

What Her Majesty's Government wish to ascertain is, whether the course intended to be pursued toward Holstein is grounded on the Federal rights of the Confederation, or is to be adopted as a means of enforcing the obligations, whatever they may be, of Denmark to the Confederation in regard to Schleswig.

Other European powers, non-German, make a great distinction in this respect.

You may read and give a copy of this despatch to his Excellency.

In consequence of my departure on leave, this instruction was executed by Mr. Corbett as *chargé-d'affaires*. He reported thereon as follows. Mr. Corbett transmitted at the same time Baron v. der Pfordten's report as chairman of the committee of the Diet. The report itself is far too voluminous for insertion, and Mr. Corbett's *précis* will suffice.

(No. 82.) *Mr. Corbett to Earl Russell.*

(*Received June* 22.)

(*Extract.*) Frankfort, June 19, 1863.

I have the honour to inclose to your Lordship a copy of the report of the joint committees appointed by the Diet to examine the proposals of Austria and Prussia with regard to the Danish Duchies.

The chairman of the committee, Baron v. der Pfordten,

* *Vide* Appendix, No. II.

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laid this document before the Diet at its weekly sitting yesterday, and copies of it were distributed to the members to enable them to consult their respective Governments during the period of three weeks which are to elapse before the report is finally brought up for adoption or rejection by a majority of votes.

I am compelled, to avoid delay, to omit sending a translation to-day, but shall not fail to do so as soon as I can have one prepared. I content myself with forwarding by this opportunity a translation of the motives, and the conclusion of the report.

It is stated in the motives for the course of action which is now recommended by the committee:

1. That the Danish Government has not complied with the various requisitions addressed to it on the part of the Diet, and has, by the proclamation of the 30th of March last, manifested an intention not to do so as regards Holstein and Lauenburg.

2. That by the above-mentioned proclamation it has endeavoured to place the Duchy of Holstein in a position incompatible with the promises made at the time the Diet suspended its action in July 1852, and suffered the country to return to its allegiance to the King of Denmark.

3. That the proclamation of March 30 is, further, in complete disaccord with the promises made, at various times, not to incorporate Schleswig with the kingdom of Denmark, or to take any steps having such a tendency.

4. That in case the King of Denmark persists in maintaining the terms of the said proclamation, the Diet will, as regards Holstein, feel itself under the necessity of resuming the proceedings in regard to a Federal execution in that Duchy, in accordance with its resolution of August 12, 1853, and, as regards Schleswig, to employ

the means requisite to enforce the rights acquired by international agreement.

5. And lastly, it is declared that the Diet consider the terms proposed to the Danish Government by your Lordship in September last would form an acceptable basis for the settlement of the question.

For the foregoing reasons the committee recommended:

1. That the Danish Government should be required to declare the proclamation of March 30 null and void, and to announce formally to the Diet, within six weeks, that the preliminary steps had been taken for the institution of a new homogeneous constitution for the Kingdom and the Duchies, either in accordance with the engagements taken in 1851–52, or on the basis proposed by Her Majesty's Government in September last.

2. That notice of this resolution should be given to the Ducal Governments as regards Holstein and Lauenburg through the Danish Minister at the Diet; and

3. As regards Schleswig through the Austrian and Prussian Ministers at Copenhagen.

4. And, finally, that the united committees should be empowered to discuss and propose further measures in case the above-mentioned demands should not be complied with on the part of the Danish Government.

After the report had been communicated to the Diet, Baron Dirckinck de Holmfeld, the Danish Minister, protested in the name of his Government against the assertions contained in it, and the conclusion drawn from them, and particularly insisted that the proclamation of the Danish Government of the 30th March had been entirely misunderstood and wrongly interpreted, especially in those parts which related to the financial question as regards Holstein, and, further, M. Dirckinck reserved all the rights of his sovereign in the matter.

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To these observations no answer was formally made, though I am given to understand that M. v. der Pfordten has privately acknowledged in some degree their justice.

M. Dirckinck inquired, from the President, if Her Majesty's Government had made any communication to him relative to this matter, and his Excellency stated that your Lordship's despatches had been confidentially communicated to him, and that he had received a copy of one of them (your Lordship's despatch of the 9th instant), and laid it before the united committee, but his Excellency seemed disposed to treat the communication as one of an informal character, inasmuch as it was not accompanied by a note from Her Majesty's Mission, in which case it would have been incumbent upon him to lay it officially before the Diet, and this, as I had the honour to state in my despatch of the 12th instant, M. Kübeck, when I communicated the despatch to him, seemed very unwilling to do. There can be no doubt, however, that the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, as expressed in the two despatches above-mentioned, has had a very important effect upon the deliberation of the committees, and has materially aided in inducing the separation of the question as regards Holstein from that of Schleswig, the first of which it is not disputed the Diet has a right to interfere in; whereas the other is of an international character, and one which the Diet cannot pretend to decide without reference to other Powers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWIN CORBETT.

The next step of any moment is thus reported on by myself:—

(No. 96.) *Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell.*

(*Received July 27.*)

Frankfort, July 24, 1863.

My Lord,—With reference to the actual state of the Danish Duchies question, I find that the period of six weeks within which the Danish Government is summoned to reply to the Diet's demand for withdrawal of the decree of the 30th March, expires on the 26th August.

Should that reply be unsatisfactory, the form of procedure will require that a proposition be laid before the Diet as to the next step to be taken, and, according to the usual course, fourteen days must elapse before such proposition can be voted upon. In cases of urgency this delay is sometimes shortened.

Presuming that execution is voted, a further delay of six weeks is prescribed by the rules of the Diet (after notification of the vote has been made to the Government concerned) before proceeding to military occupation.

There exists, however, a party in the Diet which contends that notice of execution was already given to Denmark in 1861, and that therefore this term may be curtailed; but it is improbable that this serious step will be precipitated.

Referring to Mr. Corbett's despatches of the 10th and 15th of July, I find that in the former he stated that the term of six weeks was to be given to the Danish Government to answer the Diet's summons, and that in the latter he informed your Lordship that the Diet's resolution had been communicated to M. Dirckinck on that day. The six weeks are, therefore, to be computed from that date. These data will bring the term of execution, if regularly proceeded with, to the 15th of October.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. MALET.

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On July 31 Earl Russell writes as follows to Lord Bloomfield, Her Majesty's ambassador at Vienna, and Lord Bloomfield answers on August 6.

(No. 99.) *Earl Russell to Lord Bloomfield.*

Foreign Office, July 31, 1863.

My Lord,—I send you a despatch I have received from the hands of His Swedish Majesty's envoy at the Court of Her Majesty.*

These matters are becoming serious. There can be little doubt that Denmark will regard the advance of German troops into Holstein as a hostile invasion and not as a Federal execution. It is also clear that she will be supported by Sweden. It is a great misfortune that in 1861 Austria and Prussia should have rejected the proposal of Denmark to settle the Holstein dispute in the first instance. The resolution taken by Germany not to agree to any proposition respecting Holstein, unless the Schleswig question were settled at the same time, gives Denmark ground for maintaining that Federal execution in Holstein means invasion in Schleswig.

Would it not be possible even now to separate the two questions; to point out the defects of the Danish letters-patent of March 30 in regard to Holstein, without touching the question of Schleswig? That very difficult question might be left, as it ought to be, to European negotiation.

You will communicate these views to Count Rechberg, and tell him that if Germany persists in confounding Schleswig with Holstein, other Powers of Europe may confound Holstein with Schleswig, and deny the right of

* *Vide* Appendix, No. III.

Germany to interfere with the one any more than she has with the other, except as a European Power.

Such a pretension might be as dangerous to the independence and integrity of Germany as the invasion of Schleswig might be to the independence and integrity of Denmark.

The calm consideration of the existing difficulties will, it is to be hoped, induce Austria to consult the European Powers before she impels the Diet to a definitive resolution.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

(No. 107.) *Lord Bloomfield to Earl Russell.*

(*Received August* 10.)

(*Extract.*) Vienna, August 6, 1863.

In pursuance of the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch of the 31st ultimo, I have stated to Count Rechberg the hopes of Her Majesty's Government that a Federal execution in Holstein would not take place this year, and that the Imperial Government, in face of other dangers in Europe, would exercise its influence at Frankfort to prevent the Diet from taking a definite resolution.

His Excellency replied that he had been prepared for a communication from Her Majesty's Government in this sense, but that he did not see how Germany could be called upon to abandon a course which was in conformity with the laws and usages of the Diet.

His Excellency is as unwilling as ever to admit that the interests of Schleswig are disconnected from those of Holstein, and consequently of Germany, and he considers that, as they have been mixed together for so long past, it is impossible for Germany to abandon its right to inter-

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fere. He added that no question ever could arise on the right of succession to the Danish monarchy, for Schleswig and Holstein would go together on the next demise of the crown with the other component parts of the kingdom. The act of the Great Powers of 1852 had clearly established this point, and he asked, as the succession to the crown was secured, why should not the King of Denmark make some administrative arrangements and concessions that would conciliate a now dissatisfied population, and consolidate his power?

Count Rechberg is evidently unwilling to hold out hopes that the proceedings of the German Diet can be arrested; he thinks, on the contrary, that the Danish patent of the 30th of March can still be modified.

Before leaving his Excellency, I informed him that the Swedish Government would not remain indifferent to a Federal execution in Holstein, and that this measure of the Diet, if persisted in, might have serious consequences in Europe.

On September 16 Earl Russell thus writes to Mr. Grey, acting as Her Majesty's envoy at Paris, offering the good offices of Her Majesty's Government in conjunction with France:—

(No. 125.) *Earl Russell to Mr. Grey.*

(*Extract*).

Foreign Office, September 16, 1863.

Sir,—The question of Schleswig-Holstein, which for more than ten years has been the subject of prolonged and bitter controversy, appears again to threaten actual hostilities.

As the matter is now put on the question of right, there

are some propositions which appear to Her Majesty's Government incontrovertible.

They are:—

1. That Denmark owes to Germany a complete written explanation with respect to the bearing of the ordinance of the 30th of March on the laws, and especially on the financial position of the Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg.

2. That Germany cannot justly order a Federal execution with a view to promote or to prevent the establishment of a constitution common to Denmark, Schleswig, Holstein, and Lauenburg.

3. That the affairs of Schleswig can only be treated between Germany and Denmark as a matter of international concern.

4. That as a matter of international concern it is to be desired that Germany would lay down with precision what are the rights she claims for the German inhabitants of Schleswig, and in what manner any engagements made on their behalf have been, in the opinion of the German Diet, violated by Denmark.

As the matter stands at present, the threatened Federal execution will probably only produce a needless effusion of blood. It might produce further some danger to the balance of power, especially if the integrity and independence of Denmark were in any way impaired by the demands of Germany and the measures consequent thereupon.

If the Government of the Emperor of the French are of opinion that any benefit would be likely to follow from an offer of good offices on the part of Great Britain and France, Her Majesty's Government would be ready to take that course.

If, however, the Government of France would consider such a step as likely to be unavailing, the two Powers

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might remind Austria, Prussia, and the German Diet that any act on their part, tending to weaken the integrity and independence of Denmark, would be at variance with the treaty of the 8th of May, 1852.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

On September 21, I addressed the following despatch to Earl Russell, reporting the approaching execution in pursuance of the recommendation of the committee :—

(No. 130.) *Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell.*

(*Received September* 23.)

Frankfort, September 21, 1863.

My Lord,—I had the honour of acquainting your Lordship by telegram yesterday that in a sitting of the Diet held on Saturday the 19th, the report of the joint committees for the affairs of the Danish Duchies and for execution had been presented, and that this report proposed for the Diet's adoption a resolution directing military execution in the Duchy of Holstein, and that the Diet's vote thereupon would be taken on the 1st of October.

It would be needlessly occupying your Lordship's time to do more than give a brief extract from the long reasoning of this report, and a summary of the conclusions rather fuller than that which I had the honour of conveying to your Lordship by the telegraph.

The sentence of the report which appears to me of the greatest importance, runs to this effect:—

'The aim of the execution consists unmistakably in carrying out the Diet's decrees of the 11th of February

and the 12th of August, 1858, of the 8th of March, 1860, of the 7th of February, 1861, and the 9th of July, 1863, in so far as this has not already been done, and at the same time in fulfilment of the declared engagement entered into by the royal rescript of the years 1851–2, with reference to the Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg —that is to say, to establish between the said Duchies, together with Schleswig and the Kingdom of Denmark proper, a general constitution, connecting them by a common union (*gleichartige Herbande*), which should secure the independence and equal rights of each in such wise that no one part should be subordinated to another, and likewise for the establishment of provincial constitutions for the Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg, possessing a representation with competence of final decision.'

The provisions offered for the Diet's acceptance on the 1st of October are to this effect:—to declare the reply of the Danish Government of the 27th August to the Diet's repeated summons unsatisfactory, and that execution must consequently take place; that Austria, Prussia, Hanover, and Saxony be entrusted with carrying out this execution; that the last two States shall name commissioners who will have to direct the mode of execution in conformity with instructions from the Diet, and will carry on the government of the Duchies in the name of the Diet, in lieu of the Government of the King-Duke, and without prejudice to his temporarily suspended rights; that the said two Governments be invited to place 6,000 men at the disposal of the commissioners, and that Austria and Prussia be requested to support them with reserves sufficient to overcome any possible resistance to the execution; that the usual forms observed in execution, as presented by the rules of the Diet in the way of notification, &c., be observed, the term of three weeks being

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fixed as the delay within which Denmark will have to notify compliance with or rejection of the Diet's conditions; that the four Governments which it is proposed to entrust with the execution be requested to prepare everything for the immediate carrying out of the decision of the Diet.

I have to draw your Lordship's attention to the period of three weeks allowed to the Danish Government to notify its decision, as being the briefer term prescribed by the formula of execution, all details of which will be found in my despatch of the 24th of July, 1863.*

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. MALET.

On September 25, Earl Russell thus addresses the Swedish envoy in London :—

(No. 132.) *Earl Russell to Count Wachtmeister.*

(*Extract.*)

Foreign Office, September 25, 1863.

Her Majesty's Government set the highest value on the independence and integrity of Denmark.

Her Majesty's Government would be ready to offer their good offices to the two parties about to contend in arms. Her Majesty's Government would be ready to do so in conjunction with France or alone. But the course which Her Majesty might be advised to take with regard to these matters, if the good offices of Her Majesty's Government should be unsuccessful, must be the subject of future consideration and decision.

Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to say that Denmark is altogether in the right, or that Germany

* *Vide ante*, No. 96.

has not some grounds of complaint in reference to the condition of the German population in Schleswig. But they think these differences should be the subject of negotiation, either in conferences or otherwise, and should not be brought to the issue of war.

Her Majesty's Government will be ready to remind Austria and Prussia of their treaty obligations to respect the integrity and independence of Denmark.

The report drawn up by Baron v. der Pfordten on the question of the Danish Duchies, was laid before the Diet, as has been already stated, on September 19. It is a voluminous document, and need not here be given, but no reference whatever was therein made to foreign intervention, and the whole question was treated from the purely German point of view. My notification concerning this report, and that it would be voted upon on October 1, drew the following despatch from Earl Russell. Copies of this despatch were sent to Her Majesty's representatives at Vienna and Berlin for communication to those Cabinets.

(No. 137.) *Earl Russell to Sir A. Malet.*

Foreign Office, September 29, 1863.

Sir,—Your despatch of the 21st instant shows, in a convincing manner, that the state of affairs between Germany and Denmark is becoming very serious.

You state that a report of a Committee has been presented to the Diet, from your analysis of which it appears that the framers of this report recommend Federal execution in the Duchy of Holstein; that the report is to be

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considered on the 1st of October, and, if adopted, execution will take place three weeks afterwards; the shortest interval of time, you observe, which the constitution of the Diet allows.

It appears further that the grounds upon which the resolution of Federal execution is to be based, are of the widest description.

The report says: 'The aim of the execution consists unmistakably in carrying out the Diet's decrees of the 11th of February and the 12th of August, 1858, of the 8th of March, 1860, of the 7th of February, 1861, and the 9th of July, 1863, in so far as this has not already been done, and at the same time, in fulfilment of the declared engagement entered into by the royal rescript of the year 1851–52, with reference to the Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg; that is to say, to establish between the said Duchies, together with Schleswig and the Kingdom of Denmark proper, a general constitution, connecting them by a common union (*gleichartige Herbande*), which should secure the independence and equal rights of each, in such wise that no one part should be subordinated to another; and likewise for the establishment of provincial constitutions for the Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg, possessing a representation with competence of final decision.'

It is impossible for Her Majesty's Government to shut their eyes to the gravity of the proposition which the Diet have to consider.

Had the report of the Committee gone no further than to affirm that the Royal letters-patent do not fulfil the resolutions of the Diet as to the Duchy of Holstein; that the Duke of Holstein has no right to dispose of the money of Holstein without the consent of its representatives; that he has no right to enact laws for Holstein, but in

concurrence with the Diet of Holstein; that the long delays of the Danish Government to come to a satisfactory arrangement have made Federal execution necessary, Her Majesty's Government, although they would still have lamented the interference of the German Diet at this particular time, could not have denied that the principles asserted were the sound and, indeed, the fundamental principles of constitutional government.

But it cannot be pretended that the constitution of the whole Danish monarchy can be subject to the jurisdiction of the German Confederation.

If the representatives of the Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg are to have a veto on the proceedings of the Danish Parliament and of the Danish Government, it is obvious that measures the most necessary for the defence of Denmark against a foreign enemy may be hindered, the whole action of the Danish monarchy may be paralysed, and the integrity and independence of Denmark may be seriously impaired.

Her Majesty, by the Treaty of London of May 8, 1852, is bound to respect the integrity and independence of Denmark. The Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia have taken the same engagement.

Her Majesty could not see with indifference a military occupation of Holstein, which is only to cease upon terms injuriously affecting the constitution of the whole Danish monarchy.

Her Majesty's Government could not recognise this military occupation as a legitimate exercise of the powers of the Confederation, or admit that it could properly be called a Federal Execution.

Her Majesty's Government could not be indifferent to the bearing of such an act upon Denmark, and upon European interests.

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Her Majesty's Government therefore earnestly entreat the German Diet to pause, and to submit the questions in dispute between Germany and Denmark to the mediation of other Powers unconcerned in the controversy, but deeply concerned in the maintenance of the peace of Europe and the independence of Denmark.

You are desired to give the President of the Diet a copy of this despatch.

I have, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

Direct intervention of any foreign State with the Diet was an unprecedented event; but, in obedience to my instructions, though I only received Earl Russell's despatch late on the night of September 30 by special courier, I contrived to place it in the hands of the President by ten in the morning of October 1, the Diet meeting at twelve. I reported my proceedings to Earl Russell in the following despatch.

(No. 141.) *Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell.*

(*Received October* 2.)

Frankfort, October 1, 1863.

My Lord,—Captain Blackwood delivered to me, at a late hour last night, your Lordship's despatch of the 29th September.

I have conformed myself to your Lordship's instructions in delivering a copy of it, with the note of which I have the honour to annex a copy, to his Excellency the President of the Diet this morning.

I had but a brief conversation with Baron de Kübeck on handing him my note. His Excellency observed that your Lordship's despatch came late, as the vote on the

report was to be taken this day. I said I hoped it was not too late to obtain that pause in the proceedings of the Diet which your Lordship's despatch earnestly entreated the Diet to make, in the name of the British Government.

His Excellency pressed me to give him a French translation of your Lordship's despatch; but this I declined, not only as contrary to our standing instructions, but from its being impossible to make a translation in time to accompany the presentation of the original in the sitting of the Diet; which takes place at 12; my interview with his Excellency was at 10 o'clock.

I beg leave to observe that, in one point, your Lordship is in some misapprehension of my despatch of the 21st September. It is therein stated that three weeks were fixed as the period within which the Danish Government will have to notify compliance with, or rejection of, the Diet's conditions; and that this is the briefest term prescribed by the formula of execution.

This does not imply (as your Lordship has read my despatch) that the execution will take place at the expiration of these three weeks. There must elapse, at least, one, if not two, more such periods before the troops and commissioners will occupy Holstein, if the Diet adopts the conclusions of the report.

The order of execution directs that, after the State threatened with execution has intimated its refusal to obey the first summons, a second communication should be made that the actual execution will take place within a fixed period.

This term may be of six weeks; but may also be reduced to three, which is the briefest, as six is the longest, term prescribed by the Diet's rules.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. MALET.

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The Diet, as is well known, voted for execution by fourteen votes to two, the voice of Denmark being suspended.

The influence of Her Majesty's Government, which had been exerted at Vienna and Berlin as well as at Frankfort to avert this decision, was attended with similarly fruitless results wherever it was used. Here is a despatch from Lord Bloomfield, showing that our intervention was altogether repudiated, and the offer made at this time by Denmark to modify the patent of March 30 proved equally unavailing.

(No. 157.) *Lord Bloomfield to Earl Russell.*

(*Received October* 12.)

Vienna, October 8, 1863.

My Lord,—I have had the honour to receive your Lordship's despatch of the 30th ultimo, inclosing the copy of your despatch to Her Majesty's Minister at Frankfort on the state of affairs between Germany and Denmark. After reading this despatch to Count Rechberg, I gave him a copy of it, and inquired if any decision had been come to respecting the notice that would be taken of this despatch.

His Excellency replied that he was in communication with Prussia on the subject; and he then went on to observe that Her Majesty's Government were ever unwilling to render justice to the proceedings of the German Confederation in the Danish question, or to take into account the patience with which they had for so many years been endeavouring to come to an understanding with Denmark respecting the engagements which she contracted in 1851–52. He said the resolution to carry

a Federal execution into the Duchy of Holstein had been adopted after very long and serious consideration and the fullest investigation of the whole matter. The proceeding was, he added, in exact conformity with the laws and practice of the Confederation. His Excellency does not admit that the act of the Diet is directed against the Kingdom of Denmark, but against the Duchy of Holstein, which Duchy, though forming part of the Danish monarchy, cannot, he observed, on that account be considered as released from its allegiance to the laws of the Diet, and comes as much under their application as any other German State.

I alluded to the hope expressed in your Lordship's despatch to Sir Alexander Malet, that the Diet might be induced to pause in carrying out their resolution, and to submit the question in dispute to the mediation of other Powers, but could obtain no other reply than the assurance that the subject occupied the earnest attention of the Imperial Government, and that he was in communication with the Cabinet of Berlin respecting it.

Since writing the foregoing, I have again seen Count Rechberg, and inquired whether his Excellency had anything further to say in reply to the idea of a mediation, as set forth in your Lordship's despatch, which had been communicated to the Diet. He replied that he was not yet in possession of the opinion of the Prussian Government on the subject, but that the mediation of a foreign Power between the Confederation and Holstein could not be thought of.

This exclusion of all question of mediation, he observed, was, of course, not applicable to the general affairs of Schleswig.

I have, &c.

(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

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Denmark was induced by the influence of both England and France, used in a similar sense, to make certain concessions to German exigencies, and amongst them offered to modify the patent of March 30, which had been particularly obnoxious in Germany, as interfering with the special privileges claimed for Holstein; and Earl Russell instructed me to make this concession known to the President of the Diet in the following despatch :—

(No. 160.) *Earl Russell to Sir A. Malet.*

Foreign Office, October 14, 1863.

Sir,—You will represent to the President of the Diet that Her Majesty's Government have reason to believe that the answer of Denmark to the Diet will show her readiness to modify the patent of the 30th of March in the sense of the decree of the Diet of March 1860; that is to say, to make it provisional until the definite position of Holstein is arranged with Germany. In this way the Holstein States will retain their constitutional privileges, as recognised by the royal patent. But if this is done Denmark hopes to obtain the postponement of the Federal execution.

You will represent to the President that a Federal execution, even supposing it were strictly confined to Holstein, could not take place without an aggravation of the present difficulties.

The application of the revenues of Holstein to the maintenance of the Federal troops employed in Holstein would be a serious loss to the Danish Government. It is most probable that the Danish Government would retort by measures of reprisal and blockade very injurious to

German commerce. But those measures would create as much exasperation in Germany as the Federal execution would do in Denmark. So that the quarrel would become envenomed; claims of compensation on both sides would arise, and fresh difficulties would stand in the way of a pacific arrangement.

Then again, if war should be extended to Schleswig and Jutland, it must be remembered that Austria and Prussia, as well as Great Britain and France, are bound by the treaty of 1852 to respect the integrity and independence of Denmark. These engagements would, of course be observed, but might cause fresh complications at Frankfort.

Her Majesty's Government fully admit the claims of the Confederation in Holstein and Lauenburg, but they believe that if the demands of the Diet were limited to these German Duchies, those demands might be satisfied without Federal execution, and without incurring the perils which might arise from the adoption of so extreme a measure.

You are instructed to give a copy to the President of the Diet of this despatch.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

Here are some important remarks of Lord Bloomfield, referring to Earl Russell's despatch, and betraying Count Rechberg's annoyance at any direct negotiation with the Diet being even attempted:—

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(No. 186.) *Lord Bloomfield to Earl Russell.*

(*Received October* 26.)

Vienna, October 22, 1863.

My Lord,—I have read and given to Count Rechberg a copy of your Lordship's despatch of the 14th instant to Sir Alexander Malet on the question of the Danish Duchies.

His Excellency did not appear to have been aware that this communication had been made by Her Majesty's Minister at Frankfort to the President, and was disinclined to speak on the subject. He observed, however, that the provisional arrangement alluded to would be insufficient, and that the only way to arrive at an understanding was for Denmark to withdraw the royal patent of the 30th March.

As to menaces of war, he said Germany was not going to make war, that a Federal execution was not war, and that if Denmark committed acts of hostility against Germany in execution of her legal calling she would become responsible for them. That as to Schleswig or Jutland, there was no thought of entering either country, and that with regard to the treaty of 1852 Austria and Prussia must take the consequences of it, but their policy would be inseparable from that of Germany.

I told Count Rechberg that Her Majesty's Government hoped means would yet be discovered of preventing the threatened Federal execution, for there was no calculating what European complication might not spring from it.

I have, &c.

(Signed) BLOOMFIELD.

Earl Russell now essayed his influence with the Danish Government to induce them to withdraw the patent of March 30 altogether, and addressed Sir A. Paget as follows.

(No. 183.) *Earl Russell to Sir A. Paget.*

Foreign Office, October 22, 1863.

Sir,—The accounts which Her Majesty's Government have received from Her Majesty's ambassador at Berlin tend to show that the report which had reached that capital of the intention of the Danish Government to declare, in reply to the summons of the Diet, that it will look upon Federal execution in Holstein as the commencement of hostilities on the part of Germany, has produced a most unfavourable effect.

It seems to Her Majesty's Government that Denmark, with a due regard for her own interest, should at once withdraw the patent of the 30th of March, and rest her opposition to Federal execution on the ground that it involves interference in matters relating to the constitution of the Danish monarchy and in the affairs of Schleswig.

If Denmark were to withdraw the patent altogether, and were to declare that the whole financial means of Holstein should be placed under the control of the Diet of that Duchy, she would then be in a better position to maintain that all other questions between her and Germany were matters of negotiation in regard to which she was prepared to accept the mediation of one or more impartial Powers.

If some such course as this should not be adopted by Denmark, it is hardly likely that the Diet of Frankfort will refrain from carrying out the threatened execution;

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but that measure will exhaust the revenues of Holstein, and consequently materially affect the general interests of the Danish monarchy.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

On October 23,* I had to notify to Earl Russell that the Diet declined the proposal of mediation contained in Her Majesty's despatch of September 29, which I had placed in the hands of the President of the Diet on the morning of October 1. That offer was declined in courteous terms, on the ground that the affairs of Holstein and Lauenburg were essentially affairs of the Union, and that, as they were such, the interference of foreign Powers could not be permitted.

In the first days of November I received the following despatch from Earl Russell, by which it will be seen that his lordship began to find it rather embarrassing to make proposals to an irresponsible body like the Diet, and enjoined caution in conducting the negotiations confided to me.

(No. 199.) *Earl Russell to Sir A. Malet.*

Foreign Office, October 30, 1863.

Sir,—Her Majesty's Government have reason to believe that Denmark is prepared, on the requisition of the Diet at Frankfort, to surrender to the Diet of Holstein entire control over the finances of the Duchy, including in this concession the Normal Budget.

* *Vide* Appendix, No. IV.

In return for this concession, Her Majesty's Government are informed that Denmark would expect that a due share of the National Debt should be borne by Holstein.

This latter point, however, may be reserved for subsequent arrangement.

I have to instruct you to communicate with your Danish and Prussian colleagues, and generally to shape your conduct in the manner most likely to promote an amicable settlement.

You will be careful, however, not to afford the Diet an opportunity of meeting with a refusal any overture on your part which it may assume to consider a definite proposal on the part of Her Majesty's Government; and you will on no account make any formal proposal to the President of the Diet without direct authority from me to do so.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

Denmark's concessions were looked on by the Diet as insufficient. The *repeal* of the patent of March, and not the making it provisional, was peremptorily required, and on November 14 I was under the necessity of reporting to Earl Russell as follows:—

(No. 232.) *Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell.*

(*Received November* 16.)

(*Extract.*) Frankfort, November 14, 1863.

The Diet did not hold the usual sitting on Thursday last, but is convoked extraordinarily to-day, for the purpose reported to your Lordship in my despatch of yesterday's date.

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I am detaining the messenger till the last train in the hope of being able to acquaint your Lordship whether the Danish envoy's communication has been received or not.

As it is evident that the concession of the Normal Budget to the decision of the Holstein States has only been made by Denmark on certain encouragement held out by M. de Bismarck, I have been at some pains to discover with what feeling the point is viewed here. I find much reserve among the members of the Diet in committing themselves to an opinion, but the impression I have hitherto received is that, even if no compensating conditions whatever were imposed, the concession is not of itself held to be enough.

The necessity of Denmark's formal submission to the Diet's demands for the repeal of the patent of the 30th of March is still insisted on.

M. de Dirckinck, on the other hand, asserts that his Government cannot go beyond the terms of the reply already made to that demand, namely, that the patent shall be considered as provisional.

Earl Russell instructed me under date of November 18 to ascertain whether the sole mediation of Great Britain would be acceptable at Frankfort, at the very time that my despatch of the preceding day's date informed his lordship of the effect produced at Frankfort by the King of Denmark's death, an event which exercised a most disastrous influence on our efforts at accommodation.

(No. 239.) *Earl Russell to Sir A. Malet.*

Foreign Office, November 18, 1863.

Sir,—I have to instruct you to ascertain from the President of the Diet and from the Ministers of Bavaria and Prussia at Frankfort, whether the Diet will be disposed to accept the sole mediation of Great Britain in the international questions on which Denmark and Germany are now at issue; namely, 1st, the relations of the Duchy of Schleswig to the Kingdom of Denmark Proper and to the Germanic Confederation; and, 2ndly, the position of the Duchy of Holstein in the Danish constitution.

If it should appear that the Confederation is really so disposed, instructions will be sent to you without loss of time formally to offer a mediation to the Diet.

I have desired Sir Augustus Paget to ascertain whether the Danish Government, on its part, is willing to accept British mediation for the adjustment of those questions with the German Diet.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

(No. 242.) *Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell.*

(*Received November* 19.)

Frankfort, November 17, 1863.

My Lord,—The death of the King of Denmark is an event likely to create new complications in the Holstein question.

The Diet never recognised the right of succession to the Danish throne and the States united under that sceptre, as established by the London Convention of the 8th of May, 1852; and it is more than probable that claims will be put forward on behalf of the family of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg, which that

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treaty set aside in favour of the Glücksburg branch of the same family.

The German Diet can pretend to no right of intervention as to the succession established to the throne of Denmark Proper, but pretensions may, and probably will, be put forward in behalf of the Augustenburg succession to Holstein, and this is the more likely because under that branch the Dukedoms of Holstein and Schleswig were united, and would be so again if that right could be established.

By the Warsaw Treaty of the 5th of June, 1851, Russia guaranteed the integrity of the Danish monarchy, and the London Treaty of 1852 bound the Powers which signed that act to recognise the right of succession of the Glücksburg branch to the throne, but did not adopt the Russian guarantee.

The German Diet may say that Christian IX. has no hereditary rights as Duke of Holstein, and argue that, as the Duke of Holstein is also Duke of Schleswig, neither can His Danish Majesty be Duke of the latter province.

It is worthy of notice that some of the German papers are already insisting on the necessity of pressing the execution in Holstein as much as possible, in order to prevent the establishment of the new King of Denmark's authority as Duke in that province.

Your Lordship is aware of the protection and countenance which the Augustenburg family have always found in Prussia, and although that Government signed the Treaty of London, it is generally believed in Germany that the Berlin Cabinet would see with pleasure any opening for the establishment of the ancient hereditary rights of that House in Holstein and Schleswig.

It is quite certain that other members of the Diet (Bavaria may be specially instanced) have looked forward

to the possibility of the event which has now happened by the death of the King of Denmark, as giving occasion to assert the Augustenburg claims; and Her Majesty's Government must, I apprehend, be prepared to see them put forward in this conjuncture in some shape that will add to existing political embarrassments.

I have already tried to impress on the members of the Diet with whom I have spoken on this subject, that the accession of King Christian IX. imposes on the Diet the duty and necessity of delay in the measure of execution, by the strongest motives of international comity and prudence.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. MALET.

It has been frequently affirmed that Her Majesty's Government held out no clear hope of material aid to the Danish Government, but constantly and consistently advised them to make concessions to Germany. In the annexed document, while we recognise the right of German interference in Holstein, we as distinctly say that we may be obliged to interfere if Federal troops enter the Duchy on international grounds.

*Memorandum.*

*Presented to M. de Bismarck on November 24, 1863, by Sir A. Buchanan, in the name of Her Majesty's Government.*

(*Inclosure in No.* 289.)

The new constitution in Denmark could never have been adopted if the Prussian Government had not neglected the advice which Her Majesty's Government offered to them in May with respect to the expediency of not allowing the Holstein question to add to the compli-

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cations and dangers of Europe. The German Confederation may possibly have a right to declare war against Denmark, but transactions which concern Denmark and Schleswig, but have no bearing on the affairs of Holstein, cannot give the Diet a right of Federal execution in the latter Duchy.

Should Federal troops enter Holstein on purely Federal grounds Her Majesty's Government would not interfere, but should it appear that Federal troops had entered the Duchy on international grounds Her Majesty's Government may be obliged to interfere.

The Diet should therefore demand that the letters-patent of March 30, issued by the late King of Denmark, should be immediately withdrawn, threatening execution if their requisition is not complied with, and both sides should refer their international differences to the Powers who were parties to the Treaty of London of the 8th of May, 1852.

War may then be averted; and, if Germany is to be saved from a democratic revolution, it will be necessary that Austria and Prussia should act in concert in this question.

Closely following upon this declaration will be found the despatch next given, in which Her Majesty's Government entirely approve a Russian scheme for pacification which turned out not less abortive than all others that were devised.

(No. 292.) *Earl Russell to Lord Bloomfield.*

Foreign Office, November 26, 1863.

My Lord,—Prince Gortchakoff has communicated to Her Majesty's ambassador at St. Petersburg a plan which

he thinks may lead to a peaceful settlement of the differences between Denmark and the German Confederation.

His Excellency proposes that the five Courts who signed the Treaty of London should send envoys to Copenhagen to congratulate the King of Denmark on his accession, and that their envoys should be instructed to inform the Danish Government that the five Powers adhere to their engagements for maintaining the integrity of the Danish monarchy. They should at the same time state that Denmark has not, in the opinion of the five Powers, fulfilled her engagements towards Germany in regard to Schleswig, which may be considered by Austria and Prussia as forming part of the general arrangement.

Prince Gortchakoff thinks that this collective action might show the Danish Government the necessity of making such modifications in the Fundamental Law as may enable all the five Powers to co-operate in maintaining the integrity of Denmark.

Her Majesty's Government entirely approve the proposal of the Russian Cabinet, and they hope that it will be adopted by the Austrian Government.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

About this date I had a short conversation with Baron von der Pfordten, which I reported as follows:

(No. 299.) *Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell.*

(*Received November* 27.)

Frankfort, November 25, 1863.

My Lord,—I have the honour to forward to your Lordship Lord Augustus Loftus' despatch of the 23rd instant, which has reached me under flying seal.*

* *Vide* Appendix, No. V.

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In reference to the conversation his Lordship reports with Baron Schrenk, it may not be unimportant to state to your Lordship that the Bavarian envoy to the Diet, Baron v. der Pfordten, desires that the Diet's measure of execution in Holstein and Lauenburg should be converted into a seizure (*prise de possession*) of those provinces, to be so held till the Diet has decided in whom is vested the right of succession.

Coupled with his Excellency's already reported declarations again the right of succession of King Christian IX., the tendency of this policy admits of no doubt. In the first place Denmark's right of resistance to an occupation of the Duchies on such a basis is indisputable. Secondly, before it could be entered on, a Federal decree must be pronounced, changing the execution into an openly hostile measure.

I made this remark to his Excellency, saying that it could not be intended to enter the Duchies as for execution, and then declare that they were taken possession of for other previously undeclared objects, and his Excellency admitted the justness of my observation. M. v. der Pfordten, however, in no degree retreated from his declaration of principle, and said that Germany risked revolution and the overthrow of the existing order of things if the Governments shrank from asserting their rights in their dispute with Denmark.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. Malet.

My next communication to Earl Russell shows to some extent the injury wrought by the death of the King of Denmark.

(No. 320.) *Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell.*

(*Received November* 30.)

Frankfort, November 27, 1863.

My Lord,—I had the honour of acquainting your Lordship by telegram on Monday last, the 23rd instant, that the Austrian and Prussian Governments admitted in principle the desirableness of mediation by Her Majesty's Government in the international questions in dispute between Denmark and Germany relating to Schleswig, and to the relations of Holstein to Denmark in the constitution, on which points I had been instructed by your Lordship to ascertain the dispositions of these Governments. I have to add to that report, that Count Rechberg thought it would be necessary to require the King of Denmark to withdraw the sanction of the common constitution for Denmark and Schleswig, as a preliminary condition to acceptance of British mediation.

This communication, confidentially made to me by Baron de Kübeck, was accompanied by an expression of great regret that our offer had not been made during the lifetime of the late King of Denmark, when Austria could readily have accepted the friendly proposal.

M. de Sydow, on his part, intimated that his Government would expect to have the points to which our mediation was to extend clearly defined, but did not specify any point of limitation.

M. v. der Pfordten has since informed me that the circumstances which had arisen out of the death of the King of Denmark obliged his Government, with much regret, to reject any offer of foreign mediation.

Had the wishes of Her Majesty's Government in this respect been clearly intimated at an earlier period they might, he said, have appeared admissible, but at present

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the question of succession was the first to be decided, and his Government, duly appreciating the friendly feeling of Her Majesty's Government, must decline our offer.

I am further enabled to inform your Lordship that, independently of the inadmissible condition which the Austrian Government would impose on your Lordship's projected offer of mediation, such is the temper of the minor German Governments, or such the influence of external pressure upon them, in the actual state of the Danish question, that I hardly think one of them could admit British or any other intervention, however restricted might be its scope; but on this complication of the subject I will enter more fully in another despatch.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. MALET.

The document next in succession is a declaration made by M. de Bismarck in the Berlin chamber on December 1, and is remarkable as a strong expression of his resolution to maintain Confederate rights, and execute the Federal obligations which he was so speedily to ignore and set aside.

*Declaration of M. de Bismarck in the sitting of December* 1, 1863.

(*Translation. Inclosure in No.* 357.)

Our position in reference to the Danish question depends upon a past with which we cannot arbitrarily break, and which imposes upon us duties towards the Duchies, towards Germany, and towards the European Powers. The object of our policy will be to act up to our engagements in the manner which our highest political duty,

viz., the care for the honour and security of our own fatherland, prescribes to us. CHAP. V.

Prussia's position in the question must, for the present, be ruled by the London Treaty of 1852. The signature of that treaty may be matter of regret, but as it has been signed, honour and wisdom both require that no doubt should be entertained of our faithful regard for treaty engagements.

Whilst recognising this obligation, however, as binding upon ourselves, we must equally assert its binding character upon Denmark.

The London Treaty was the concluding act of a series of negotiations which were carried on in the years 1851 and 1852 between Germany and Denmark. The engagements taken by Denmark in the course of these negotiations, and the treaty which Prussia and Austria concluded in London in virtue of the same, are reciprocal obligations, and the one falls with the other. The maintenance of these stipulations is in the meanwhile, especially as regards Schleswig, of the greatest importance, for it gives us the right, as regards this Duchy, to demand from Denmark the fulfilment of treaty engagements. Were, with the Treaty of London, the agreement of 1851 and 1852 to fall to the ground, we should lose as regards Schleswig those treaty rights which are endorsed by the recognition of the Great European Powers. A departure, therefore, from the treaties of 1852 would, as regards the position of Schleswig and the demands of Germany in respect to that duchy, do away with the treaty basis created in 1852, and make the general recognition of a new basis dependent upon fresh negotiations or upon the issue of a European war.

In order that these treaties may maintain their value for us, it is necessary that they should be conscientiously

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carried out on the part of Denmark. That this has not taken place I may consider as admitted on all sides, and therefore need not here enter into particulars.

The decision upon the question as to when we shall be placed in the position, by the non-fulfilment of the Danish engagements, to renounce the London Treaty, must be left in the hands of the King's Government; they can neither leave this question to the decision of the Germanic Confederation nor make it the subject of declarations. We have come to an understanding with the Imperial Government of Austria which, for the present, ensures a corresponding attitude of both Powers in regard to the Treaty of London and its consequences. This understanding starts from the assumption that King Christian would be entitled to succeed in Lauenburg even without the London Treaty, inasmuch as the next heir, Prince Frederick of Hesse, has renounced in his favour. In regard to Holstein, on the other hand, his title to succession depends upon the London Treaty, and the execution of that treaty is dependent upon the fulfilment of the treaties that preceded it, and which, with the London Treaty, formed part of a connected whole. That such is the case has been lately proved in the Danish Reichsrath by the testimony of the most competent of all witnesses, M. Bluhme, who was Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1851 and 1852. This is the view on which was based our vote in the Diet of the 28th ultimo, which has already been made known by the public press.

So long as the London Treaty is not to be considered void, we regard King Christian as the heir of the rights belonging to, as well as the wrongs inflicted by, his predecessor. The motives, therefore, which caused the decree of execution of the 1st of October continue unchanged, whilst present circumstances appear to demand an immediate carrying out of it.

For this purpose we have, conjointly with Austria, brought forward at the Diet the motions necessary for the immediate carrying out of the execution.

Whatever decision may be come to at Frankfort, Prussia will, under all circumstances, in conformity with her position as a European Power, and as a member of the Germanic Confederation, calmly but firmly maintain the rights of Germany in the Duchies and her own position in the Council of the Great Powers.

The King's Government reckons upon the ready assistance of the country and its representatives to assist them in the fulfilment of this task. They will have to take the necessary military measures for the purpose of Federal co-operation in the execution, and they will lay before the Landtag the proposals for the necessary financial means.

I reported the vote for immediate execution on December 8, in the following despatch to Earl Russell :—

(No. 397.) *Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell.*

(*Received December* 10.)

Frankfort, December 8, 1863.

My Lord,—I had the honour of reporting to your Lordship by telegram yesterday that the Diet had voted for immediate execution in Holstein and Lauenburg.

This is a very important victory of the Moderate German Party over the Party of Action.

I learn that in the first instance only eight votes supported the joint propositions of the two Great Powers, but that two adhesions were subsequently appended to the protocol.

The sitting was of unusual duration, and the slight

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details of what passed in it which have yet reached me, depict it as having been more than ordinarily agitated.

A direct proposition by Bavaria, for occupation, was negatived by a large majority.

The newspapers this morning say that the execution is to take place without prejudice to the question of succession. My information, however, does not allow me to state that the Austrian and Prussian proposition made any direct allusion to the question of succession, though Count Rechberg's language in the Vienna papers distinctly enunciates this principle, that it would remain in suspense, which his Excellency apparently thought would reconcile some of the advocates of strong measures to the more moderate course he had proposed.

There is a violent explosion of anger among all that party which looks on the death of King Frederick of Denmark as an occasion of separating Schleswig and Holstein from the Danish crown, at any less stringent measure being adopted towards Denmark than occupation; and it is to be feared that the execution will be taken advantage of to raise disturbances in Schleswig, which, as I have already remarked to your Lordship, will excite the agitation now prevailing in Germany to a degree that the Governments will find it hard to control, even if they had the wish to do so.

In this state of things, it seems more than unfair that the question of the Augustenburg succession should be judged by the Diet. So many members of the Confederation are declared partizans of Prince Frederick's pretensions that impartiality is not to be expected, and their decision is, so to say, taken beforehand.

I beg further to state that the thesis of Danish bad faith discharging from all obligations to the London

Treaty of 1852, is largely supported according to the theory put forward in this respect by M. de Beust.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. MALET.

The execution in Holstein had taken place, and Earl Russell had used his influence at Copenhagen to prevent hostile collision in Holstein, where the Danes submitted to Federal pretensions without resistance. Earl Russell then took a higher tone with Germany, and here is one of his lordship's despatches to Her Majesty's envoy at Berlin, and one addressed to myself, proposing a conference.

(No. 503.) *Earl Russell to Sir A. Buchanan.*

Foreign Office, December 25, 1863.

Sir,—The Diet sitting at Frankfort appears to claim a right to decide on questions of succession in the several States composing the Confederation, and to be bent on asserting such right in the present case of the succession in the Duchy of Holstein.

Her Majesty's Government are not aware on what that right is founded, and you will accordingly request M. de Bismarck to point out to you, for their information, the treaty or other document which is supposed to confer it on the Diet.

You will not cease your endeavours to induce the Prussian Government to refrain from taking any hasty step against Denmark. Any precipitate action on the part of the German Confederation at the present moment

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may lead to consequences fatal to the peace of Europe, and may involve Germany in particular in difficulties of a most serious nature.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

(No. 519.) *Earl Russell to Sir A. Malet.*

Foreign Office, December 26, 1863.

Sir,—I have to instruct you to communicate to the President of the Diet, in an official note, a copy of the Treaty of London of May 8, 1852.

You will call the attention of the President to the fact that Great Britain, France, Russia, and Sweden agreed by this treaty to recognise Prince Christian of Holstein-Glücksburg, now King Christian IX., as successor to all the dominions held by the late King of Denmark, and that, in pursuance of this agreement, those Powers have so recognised King Christian.

You will point out to the President the serious complications which might ensue if, in such a state of things, the Diet of the Confederation should have recourse to any hasty measures inconsistent with the arrangements provided for by the Treaty of London.

Her Majesty's Government, you will say, are however not unwilling to discuss the question pending between Germany and Denmark in a conference composed of the ministers of all the Powers parties to the Treaty of London and of a representative to be named by the Diet, and they would consent that such conference should be held at any place which the several Powers might consider most suitable for the purpose.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

Earl Russell, though not unwilling to try the effect of the sole influence of Great Britain, did not omit to cultivate the good offices of France; and it is desirable to show the manner in which he acquitted himself of this task. In this despatch it is also useful to point out Lord Russell's acknowledgment (in paragraph 7) of the importance of maintaining the integrity of the Danish monarchy.

(No. 542.) *Earl Russell to Earl Cowley.*

Foreign Office, December 28, 1863.

My Lord,—Nothing is more embarrassing or more intricate than the Schleswig-Holstein question, if it is examined in detail. There can be no more ungrateful task than the labour of reading long and obscure despatches, in which the meaning is concealed under a multitude of words.

A broader and more general view of the question would, perhaps, lead to a more just appreciation of facts, and possibly furnish a clue by which we might escape from the dark labyrinth into open daylight.

When the kingdom of Denmark was an absolute monarchy, the king, if despotic, was yet impartial. If he found an able German statesman in Holstein, he made him his minister; if Danes and Germans squabbled in Schleswig, he displayed no preference for one side rather than for the other.

But these relations were entirely altered when free institutions were granted, and the Danish nationality prevailing at Copenhagen was infused strongly and exclusively into the whole administration of the monarchy.

From that time there have been nothing but disputes,

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complaints, interference in the domestic government of Denmark, protocols, engagements interpreted by each party according to its own view, and sometimes conflicts in arms.

Yet there are two principles which, if kept steadily in view, might clear the dispute and prevent a war.

The one is that laid down by the parties to the Treaty of London: 'That the maintenance of the integrity of the Danish monarchy, as connected with the general interests of the balance of power, is of high importance to the preservation of peace.'

The other principle is a corollary from the experience of the last fifteen years. It is: 'That the German inhabitants of the states and dominions placed under the sceptre of the King of Denmark should have ample security for just and impartial government, both in the institutions established and in the men entrusted by the king with the administration of these institutions.' These seem to have been the objects of the negotiations between Germany and Denmark of 1851–52.

Those objects have, unfortunately, not yet been attained, but if those principles were admitted on all sides, some advance would be made towards a peaceful and final settlement.

Your Excellency is instructed to read and give a copy of this despatch to M. Drouyn de Lhuys.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

On December 31, 1863, Earl Russell wrote to me a despatch,* of which I was to hand a copy to the President of the Diet. Its object was to propose a conference. This proposal was simultaneously made

* *Vide* Appendix, No. VI.

to all the Governments which had been parties to the Treaty of London of 1852, and his lordship invited the Diet to send a plenipotentiary.

This proposal, though it was accepted in form, came too late for the objects for which it was intended, and the proceedings of the two great German Powers and of the Diet speedily showed how little they meant to seek terms of accommodation. On December 26 I had felt it my duty to send the following report to Her Majesty's Government:—

*Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell.*

(*Extract.*)

Frankfort, December 26, 1863.

It will hardly be thought surprising in England that Her Majesty's Government exercise scarcely any influence in Germany as regards the dispute with Denmark, when it is evident that Austria and Prussia, though both their Cabinets are more than inclined to act with moderation, are quite unable at present to stem popular feeling.

On January 2, I wrote as follows:—

As regards the answer that may be in preparation to the note I handed to the President on the 27th December, a copy of which is annexed to my despatch of the 28th ultimo, I am as yet without any precise information, but I am informed that there is one member of the Assembly who has exercised a preponderating influence throughout this question, who pretends to make light of the prospect of serious complications, and who professes to think that

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English opposition to German aspirations and claims in this matter is not much to be apprehended.*

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. MALET.

Dated January 2, 1864.

Upon the day of the last-dated communication, I presented Earl Russell's despatch of December 31, 1863, to the President of the Diet, which was in due course referred to the standing committee on the affairs of the Elbe Duchies, and on the 8th, feeling it to be my duty to leave no ambiguity or room for doubt as to the real position of this question in Germany, I wrote thus to Earl Russell:—

*Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell.*

(*Received January* 11.)

(*Extract.*) Frankfort, January 8, 1864.

It will not surprise Her Majesty's Government to learn that the communications I have been instructed by your Lordship to make to the President of the Diet and to request his Excellency to lay before the Assembly, are received by a majority of that body with disfavour.

The wish to sever Schleswig from Denmark has taken such root in the German mind that the project will not be abandoned without extreme reluctance.

On the one hand the establishment of the Augustenburg family in the rule of the two duchies is regarded by the ultra-Conservatives as giving a vassal to Prussia; while on the part of the Democrats and Progressists, it is thought that it will be less difficult to disembarrass themselves of a comparatively weak member of the Ger-

* Baron v. der Pfordten.

manic Confederation than would be the case if the King of Denmark remained sovereign of the duchies.

Again, it is observed that the Diet has no organ in England through which replies can be given to communications which Her Majesty's Government address directly to them.

But the representatives of all the petty States think themselves entitled to criticise and discuss such official documents as are laid before them, and, being under a very different weight of responsibility from that which affects the greater Powers, are determined to show their independence by endeavouring to compromise Austria and Prussia, who they believe must fight their battles for them.

The tension of the public mind is very great, and I am bound to say that there is a wonderful indifference to our representations, while they are at the same time resented as interfering with a cherished project.

There is an absolute persuasion that England will not interfere materially, and our counsels, regarded as unfriendly, have no weight.

The Governments of the smaller States are quite powerless before the existing agitation, and many of them strive to conciliate it by going ahead of the popular wishes.

I hear nothing of replies being yet in preparation, and the opinion that I have already had the honour of expressing, that they would be delayed, seems likely to be realised in the hope that events will give plausibility to the rejection which it is desired to make of our proposals.

We are now approaching the period when M. de Bismarck, having secured the consent of Austria,

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felt himself strong enough to step between the action of German democracy and its prey, with the view of eventually appropriating to his own country the spoils of her northern neighbour. Here are the details of this beginning of the end, as I transmitted them to Her Majesty's Government; and though time has necessarily dulled the interest attaching to those events, it will scarcely be possible for any English reader to go over the steps by which the iniquitous spoliation of Denmark was accomplished without a feeling of deep interest, and of hearty regret that it should have been permitted.

(No. 733.) *Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell.*

(*Received January* 18.)

(*Extract.*) Frankfort, January 15, 1864.

I have, in obedience to your Lordship's instructions, been able to get copies of the propositions of Austria and Prussia for taking Schleswig in pledge made in the sittings of the Diet of the 28th December and the 14th instant.

Mr. Mitford has made translations of both documents, which I have also the honour to annex.

(*Inclosure* 1 *in No.* 733.)

*Motion of Austria and Prussia for the Preservation of the Rights of the Germanic Confederation as regards Schleswig.*

(*In the* 44*th Sitting of the Year* 1863.)

(*Translation.*)

The high Diet has already declared, by its resolution of the 9th July of this year, that the Royal Danish

Government have, by their proclamation of the 30th March, acted in opposition to the engagements entered into by them, neither to incorporate the Duchy of Schleswig in the actual kingdom of Denmark, nor to take any steps towards effecting that purpose. In case Denmark should persist in this violation of right, the Diet has reserved to itself the employing of all means calculated to maintain the rights of the Confederation as regards Schleswig—rights derived from international sources.

The Court of Copenhagen has, it is true, annulled the above-mentioned decree. But this only took place after its object had been attained, and a new Fundamental Law had been passed for Denmark and Schleswig which is fully equivalent to an incorporation of that duchy into the kingdom. This Fundamental Law has (notwithstanding the urgent protests of the German Powers) received the royal sanction on the 18th November; an electoral law in the same sense has just been proclaimed in Schleswig, and the 1st of January, 1864, has been fixed as the date from which the new constitution is to take effect.

In the opinion of the Governments of Austria and Prussia, this illegal proceeding of the Royal Danish Government forces the Confederation, in accordance with the above alluded to reservation, to employ all the means at its disposal to secure the rights which, as regards the crown of Denmark, are internationally its due, with respect to Schleswig.

Prussia and Austria accordingly make the following motion:—

That the High Diet address a demand to the Danish Government requiring that the Fundamental Law of the 18th of November as regards the Duchy of Schleswig should not be carried into execution, but, on the contrary, be definitively repealed; that with this demand should

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be coupled the declaration that, in the event of a refusal, they should, from a sense of their rights and their dignity, feel constrained to take the necessary measures for a military occupation of the Duchy of Schleswig, in order to secure to themselves a pledge for the fulfilment of their just demands.

It is understood that the acceptance of the present motion would imply no change as regards the effect of the reserved proviso of a judicial inquiry into the question of succession, contained in the Dietal resolution of the 7th December.

The Austrian and Prussian Ministers have, in conclusion, to move:—

That the High Diet instruct the Military Commission to propose the necessary measures to this end, so that the forces to be put at the disposal of the Diet for the eventual occupation may be placed on the requisite strength.

(*Inclosure 2 in No. 733.*)

*Renewed and urgent Motion of Austria and Prussia for the Maintenance of the Rights of the Confederation as regards Schleswig.*

(*Translation.*)

Since the envoys, in the 44th sitting of the Diet of the 28th December last, brought forward a motion for the maintenance of the rights of the Germanic Confederation as regards Schleswig, with the beginning of the current year has come the time from which the new law on the constitution is to take effect, which, in violation of the above rights, incorporates Schleswig into the actual kingdom of Denmark.

The Danish Government have not taken a step to obviate such an infraction of rights. The Ministers have,

therefore, been instructed by their Governments again urgently to bring forward this motion, including the following measure: that the Danish Government be invited to abrogate the constitution of December within as short a time as possible: They have further to recommend that a decision be come to in to-day's sitting, or at any rate in a future sitting appointed for as early a date as possible.

From the pressing nature of the reasons which call for the undelayed maintenance of the rights of the Confederation as regards Schleswig, and as these two Governments by the mouth of their envoys have expressed themselves agreed on the subject to their German confederates, directly after the bringing forward the motion of the 28th December, the envoys think that they can confidently reckon on their proposal of to-day being accepted without anticipating having to wait for the opinion of the Committee.

(No. 734.) *Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell.*

(*Received January* 18.)

(*Extract.*) Frankfort, January 15, 1864.

In the vote on the joint Austrian and Prussian proposition for seizing Schleswig as a pledge for the execution of the Danish engagements of 1851–2, the two Great Powers were supported, as I am informed, by the votes of Lichtenstein, of Reuss, of the two Lippes, Waldeck and Hesse-Homburg. Luxemburg abstained from voting, so that the actual division, in the absence of a Danish Minister for Holstein, was eleven to five.*

I learn that on the declaration of the resolution of the two Powers to carry out this resolution, in spite of the adverse vote, the Assembly was for a time in a state of violent agitation.

* Against the proposition of the two Great Powers.

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The Bavarian envoy, as my information goes, was the first who spoke in grave protest against the contemplated violation of the Diet's constitution. The Saxon Minister followed, and, as I am told, expressed himself even more strongly, and said that neither Austrian nor Prussian troops could reach Schleswig by any other route than through Holstein. That Duchy, his Excellency is stated to have said, is Federal territory, and is at present occupied by Federal troops, and Schleswig can only be entered in the mode proposed over their bodies.

The event is one of the most serious importance, and the declaration of Austria and Prussia is undoubtedly a violation of the Diet's constitution.

It seems, however, to be a natural, indeed necessary consequence of the coalition formed by the minor States on this Danish question.

The danger of the passage of the Eider is great, in whatever sense it is looked at; but it is much less serious that it should be undertaken by Austria and Prussia, on the basis of enforcing the arrangements of 1851–2, and in connexion with the Treaty of London, than that it should be effected, as the minor States desire, in conformity with the proposition of Hesse-Darmstadt, which would be a pure taking possession on the presumption of the indissoluble right of union of Schleswig with Holstein.

The outcry and bitterness of the secondary States will be loud and intense. They at once cry out, the Diet is dissolved. They cannot, however, offer actual resistance to the determined and concurrent action of Austria and Prussia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. MALET.

(No. 736.) *Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell.*

(*Received January* 18.)

Frankfort, January 16, 1864.

My Lord,—The declaration of independent action of the two Great Powers in the Diet's sitting on the 14th instant is very likely to create a sort of paralysis in that body, till it is seen what may be the result of the step of occupying Schleswig, menaced by Austria and Prussia.

There will not, I apprehend, be any attempt made for the present to present reports either on the succession question or on the proposition of conferences as already made by your Lordship.

Indeed, the information I gave your Lordship in my despatch of the 11th instant, that any report on the latter subject must be dependent on a previous vote on the validity of the Treaty of London is only confirmed by all I have subsequently heard.

At the same time, I think it right to acquaint your Lordship that the scheme for a division of Schleswig, as it was suggested in 1851–52 by Her Majesty's Government, is often reverted to here in terms that would lead to the belief that if the union of the southern part of that duchy with Holstein could be brought about, one of the chief aims of German agitation would be gained.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. MALET.

Earl Russell had, early in January, proposed joint mediation between the intending belligerents at Paris. M. Drouyn de Lhuys, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, took till the 18th to weigh this scheme, and then rejected it in these terms, in a

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despatch to the Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne, dated Paris, January 18, 1864 :—

(*Translation.*)

Paris, January 18, 1864.

Prince,—The British ambassador communicated to me, on the 7th instant, a proposal of Lord Russell, having for its object to refer the Danish question to a mediation. I had the honour to write to you the same day in order to enable you to communicate to Her Britannic Majesty's principal Secretary of State our first impression, such as I had already myself expressed it to Lord Cowley. I had received two days before, by telegraph, the news that a request for mediation was about to be addressed to us by the Court of Denmark, the chief party interested, and I was obliged to wait until I had this request in my hands before pronouncing a definitive opinion.

The despatch of M. Monrad was handed to me on the 14th, and by the courier of the 16th I unfolded to you the views of the Emperor's Government.

Lord Russell having expressed the desire to receive our answer in the form in which he himself made his communications to us, I can only recapitulate here the observations which you have been charged to make to him, and which I have myself developed in my conversations with the English ambassador.

The English Government had wisely established, as previous conditions for a conference or a mediation, several essential points, especially the maintenance of the political and military *status quo*, and the consent of the Confederation.

The English Government knows, as well as we do, that neither of these conditions seems likely to be realised at present. The proposal of Austria and Prussia, rejected by the Diet, but only because it was not sufficiently in accord-

ance with the national sentiments of Germany, and to which, moreover, the two great Powers have declared their intention to conform their conduct nevertheless,* threatens to change, at any moment, the military *status quo*.

Again, the Cabinets of Vienna and Berlin make the execution of the Treaty of London depend on the fulfilment of the engagements contracted by Denmark in 1851 and 1852. The Diet, on its side, remains occupied with the question of the succession itself, and within a few days the political *status quo* may be altered by a Federal vote.

Finally, the English Cabinet knows, equally with us, the dispositions of Germany on the subject of a mediation as well as of a conference. All the data in our possession represent the majority of the secondary States as rejecting the idea of a diplomatic intervention of the Powers, and up to the present time we have reasons to doubt the agreement of the Germanic Confederation to a mediation.

France and England could not therefore expect a useful result from the interposition of their good offices, and we regret that the course suggested by the British Government meets, in the present state of affairs, with obstacles which forbid all hope of success.

You are authorized to read this despatch to Lord Russell, and to leave him a copy of it.

Accept, &c.

(Signed) DROUYN DE LHUYS.

On January 24 Earl Russell addresses Her Majesty's ambassador at Paris in language which holds out unequivocal intentions of giving *material support* to Denmark in certain contingencies.

* A misapprehension if applied to the vote of January 14. The two Great Powers made no such declaration but pursued an opposite policy. *Vide* my Despatch, p. 81.—*A. M.*

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(No. 784.) *Earl Russell to Earl Cowley.*

Foreign Office, January 24, 1864.

My Lord,—With respect to the questions put to your Excellency by M. Drouyn de Lhuys, and contained in your despatch of the 19th instant, Her Majesty's Government instruct you to reply as follows:

Her Majesty's Government, holding the opinion stated by the great Powers in the preamble of the treaty of May 8, 1852, that the integrity of the Danish monarchy is not only an element in the balance of power but a security for peace, desire to maintain the integrity of the Danish monarchy, which is the main object of that treaty.

Her Majesty's Government are anxious, if possible, to secure that object by peaceable negotiation; but, as I have explained in my despatch of January 5, there are two very different aspects of the dispute between Germany and Denmark.

One party seeks to place the Prince of Augustenburg in possession of the Duchy of Holstein, and subsequently also in possession of the Duchy of Schleswig.

Another portion of the Germanic Confederation, consisting of the great monarchies of Austria and Prussia, acknowledge the treaty of 1852, and ask only for the fulfilment by the present King of Denmark of the engagements taken by his predecessor in 1851-52.

The first plan amounts, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, to a dismemberment of the Danish monarchy; and, in order to oppose the execution of this plan, Her Majesty's Government seek for the concert and co-operation of France, Russia, and Sweden, in order to give, if necessary, material assistance to Denmark in the resistance of such dismemberment.

The plan of Austria and Prussia seems to contemplate

the fulfilment by Denmark of certain engagements compatible with the independence and integrity of Denmark, and it would only be in the case that Denmark should fulfil all these engagements, and that further demands should be made upon her by the German Powers, that serious complications might arise.

This case, it is to be hoped, can hardly be supposed to be probable. But Her Majesty's Government do not wish to exclude it, if it should occur, from the joint consideration of the Powers whom they invite to enter into concert with them. It seems, however, to Her Majesty's Government that if a thorough good understanding can be established upon these matters between Great Britain, France, Russia, and Sweden, the moral effect of such a union would of itself be sufficient to accomplish the purposes in view.

Your Excellency's answer to M. Drouyn de Lhuys respecting the events of 1830–31 in Belgium was quite accurate. In Belgium the people rose and got possession of the capital. In Holstein and in Schleswig the accession of the present king was peacefully accomplished. It was not till the German troops entered Holstein and protected and encouraged insurrectionary movements, that opposition to the rule of Christian IX. was manifested; nor was it till numerous Democratic agents of the German National Verein swarmed into the Holstein villages that the rural population showed any indisposition to the government of the King of Denmark. Even now the inhabitants of the villages show little inclination voluntarily to swell the democratic flood of German invasion.

There is every reason to suppose that were the German troops removed from Holstein the authority of Christian IX. would be restored with ease and tranquillity.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

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(No. 785.) *Earl Russell to Earl Cowley.*

(*Extract.*)

Foreign Office, January 24, 1864.

The Ambassador of France came to the Foreign Office on the 22nd, and read to me a despatch of M. Drouyn de Lhuys addressed to the Duc de Gramont.

The Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne read also a despatch in which he was directed to inquire of me whether the despatch of Her Majesty's Government of the 18th instant alluded to material or only to moral support to be given to Denmark.

I answered that it alluded to material support, but that I would define the cases in which such a support should be given in a despatch * which I had prepared for the Cabinet, to be afterwards submitted for the sanction of the Queen.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

The next device which presented itself to Earl Russell's mind was that the Powers interested should meet in London for the purpose of agreeing on a protocol, which protocol should set forth the possible terms of arrangement. This plan was at once rejected both by the Austrian and Prussian Governments; and, at the same time, France, on account of the difficulties of a war with Germany, declined giving any pledge for affording material aid to Denmark.

Russia also observed strict reserve on that essential point, and would enter into no engagement, and

* *Vide supra*, pp. 84, 85.

the invasion of Schleswig was carried out in spite of all remonstrances.

When this act of hostility was about to be accomplished, the efforts of Her Majesty's Government were in the first instance directed to bringing about an armistice, and Earl Russell thus instructs Her Majesty's minister at Berlin, and similar despatches were sent to Vienna and to St. Petersburg.

(No. 930.) *Earl Russell to Sir A. Buchanan.*

Foreign Office, February 10, 1864.

Sir,—Her Majesty's Government being anxious to omit no opportunity for bringing to an early settlement the differences between Denmark and Germany which have led to the hostilities now unhappily in progress, and being of opinion that the time has arrived when an armistice may reasonably be agreed to by the contending parties; and Her Majesty's Government having been moreover informed by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna that the Cabinet of Vienna has made a communication to the Prussian Government on the subject, and by Her Majesty's ambassador at St. Petersburg that the Russian Government are prepared to advocate at Berlin the establishment of such armistice; I have to instruct you at once to place yourself in communication with the representatives of Austria and Russia at Berlin, and ascertain from them whether they have received instructions from their respective Courts to support a proposal for an armistice, the bases of such armistice to be that the Danes should be left in possession of the Island of Alsen, and should on the other hand be required to withdraw their military forces from the mainland of Schleswig.

If the two ministers should reply that they are autho-

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rised by their instructions to take this course, you will at once make verbally to Count Bismarck the proposal on the part of Her Majesty's Government, and, acquainting the Austrian and Russian ministers that you have done so, you will invite them to support your proposal in conformity with their instructions.

You will also acquaint the French ambassador with the communication you have made to the Prussian Government, and with the invitation you have addressed to the Austrian and Russian representatives, and you will request his Excellency to lend his assistance to induce the Prussian Government to accede to the proposed armistice.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

His lordship's next despatch shows that the idea of our sole action in giving material aid to Denmark had evaporated, and the intention is made to depend on the concurrence of France and Russia—a very different conclusion from that which M. Torben Bille's despatch indicates as having been held by the Danish Government.

(No. 987.) *Earl Russell to Sir A. Paget.*

Foreign Office, February 19, 1864.

Sir,—I transmit to you a copy of a note from M. Torben Bille, the minister of His Danish Majesty at the Court of London.

You will find that in this note M. Bille refers to the well-known fact that the Austro-Prussian army have entered Schleswig, have attacked all the positions of the

Danish army, and have fought bloody actions in consequence of their invasion.

The Danish minister infers that this invasion is made either for the purpose of depriving the Danish crown altogether of the Duchy, or of making Austria and Prussia sole arbiters of the organisation of the Danish monarchy.

The Danish minister goes on to say that he hopes Her Majesty's Government appreciate the steps which Denmark has taken in order to procure a peaceful solution—steps which the Danish Government have taken on the pressing advice of the British Government. Although the steps referred to were not taken with the promptitude necessary to make them successful, I admit generally the truth of this assertion; and I will only add that the advice referred to was given with a view to put the Danish Government right in its disputes with Austria and Prussia. Had the steps referred to not been taken, Her Majesty's Government could not have given even its good offices to Denmark to prevent, if possible, the outbreak of hostilities.

With regard to the request that friendly Powers should come to the assistance of Denmark, Her Majesty's Government can only say that every step they may think it right to take in the further progress of this unhappy contest can only be taken after full consideration and communication with France and Russia.

These Powers are as much interested in the maintenance of the integrity of the Danish monarchy as Great Britain; and Her Majesty's Government may fairly have recourse to their advice and concert in any measures to be taken for the preservation of that integrity.

In respect to the Act of Guarantee of the Duchy of Schleswig of 1720, inasmuch as the Austrian and Prussian

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Governments have made a solemn declaration that they have no intention of disturbing the integrity of Denmark, it is not necessary at the present moment to examine the question of principle, that is, the validity of the guarantee itself.

You may read and give a copy of this despatch to M. Quaade.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

(*Translation.*)

Danish Legation, February 11, 1864.

The undersigned, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of His Majesty the King of Denmark, has received the order of his Government to address to his Excellency Earl Russell, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, the following communication:—

The English Government are already aware of the entry of an Austro-Prussian army into Schleswig, of the attacks which have been directed against all the points of the position held by the Danish troops, and of the sanguinary combats which have resulted therefrom. The avowed object of these military operations is to place themselves in possession of the Duchy of Schleswig, whether in order to wrest it definitively from the Danish crown, or in order to make themselves sole arbiters of the organisation of the Danish monarchy.

The Danish Government have done all that depended on them to avoid the rupture of peace. They indulge in the hope that his Excellency Earl Russell appreciates the steps which they have taken with the object of directing

this dispute into the efficacious and pacific course of negotiations; for these steps have been taken by the Danish Government on the pressing advice of the Cabinet of London, and all the European Powers, together with England, have applauded the efforts of Denmark to preserve peace. If Austria and Prussia alone have not shared in this universal wish, it is because they seem to desire to establish an accomplished fact which coincides better with the ambitious aspirations of Germany than would a just and equitable decision, such as was to be expected from a Conference of the impartial Powers.

Against this aggression the Danish Government are firmly determined to make use of all the resources at their disposal. But, notwithstanding the energy of their troops, which vigorously dispute their native soil with the enemy, the Danish Government foresee that, if reduced to her own strength, Denmark will end by being crushed under the numerical superiority of her adversaries. It is therefore necessary, whilst there is yet time, that the Powers friendly to Denmark should come to her help, and among those Powers there is none which the Danish Government address with more confidence than England.

By the treaty of July 23, 1720, Great Britain has guaranteed 'to His Majesty the King of Denmark, his heirs and successors, the peaceable possession' of Schleswig, promising 'to maintain them therein *contra quoscunque* who might attempt to disturb them directly or indirectly.' This guarantee is still in full vigour at the present moment, as is proved by the note which Lord Westmorland addressed on the 18th of April, 1848, to the Cabinet of Berlin.

But the Danish Government need not look so far back in the past to gain the assurance that the active assistance of England will not fail them under the present circum-

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stances. The Treaty of London, in contempt of which the German Powers are at the present moment invading a Danish country, is especially due to the invariable interest which England takes in the maintenance of the Danish monarchy. And of all the great Powers, England has always been that which has endeavoured with most perseverance to remove the prospects of a collision. Recently, too, the Cabinet of London gave it to be understood at Frankfort that, in the case of an attack of Schleswig, Denmark would not be left alone in the contest. Germany has thought she could continue her course, and pay no attention to these words, but the Danish Government have not failed to see in them the expression of a determination which the British Government will put in execution with all the energy which characterizes the English nation.

The undersigned, &c.

(Signed) TORBEN BILLE.

The invasion of Schleswig was speedily followed by that of Jutland. We had signally failed in deterring the two German Powers from using their overwhelming strength against their feeble antagonist, and our remonstrances, not backed by force, had proved wholly unavailing.

Probably the conduct of the French and Russian Governments, which had never spoken menacingly as we had done, will be held to have been the more dignified. Here is the language of the Cabinet of St. Petersburg; that of France will be found in Appendix, No. VIII.

(No. 1035.) *Lord Napier to Earl Russell.*

(*Received February* 23.)

(*Extract.*) St. Petersburg, February 17, 1864.

Prince Gortchakoff has stated to me more than once that the moral concert and co-operation of the Imperial Cabinet would be afforded to Her Majesty's Government in the largest measure with a view to the settlement of the controversies between Denmark and Germany.

In fulfilment of this declaration, the Vice-Chancellor has on more than one occasion addressed to the Cabinets of Vienna and Berlin despatches of an admonitory character, with the view of confirming them in their wavering adherence to their international obligations, and of convincing them of the dangers which would be attached to a serious alienation from Her Majesty's Government.

I am bound to submit my impression to your Lordship, in justice to Prince Gortchakoff, that nothing could be more zealous and well-intentioned than the course pursued by the Vice-Chancellor in this matter. He could only do more by using the language of direct menace to the German Powers and by promising material aid to Denmark; but the position of Russia justifies Prince Gortchakoff in pausing on the threshold of such a policy, and his Excellency has never as yet held out to Her Majesty's Government any expectation that he would proceed to such extremities.

We now come to the proposed conference without an armistice. All prospect of material assistance to overmatched Denmark had totally vanished.

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(No. 1040.) *Earl Russell to Lord Bloomfield.**

Foreign Office, February 23, 1864.

Sir,—I have to instruct your Excellency immediately to address to the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs a note to the following effect.

You will state that Her Majesty's Government witness with the deepest concern the calamities of the war now existing between Austria and Prussia on the one side and Denmark on the other, and are most anxious to contribute to the utmost of their ability to the re-establishment of friendly relations between those Powers.

With this view Her Majesty's Government propose to the three Powers to authorise their plenipotentiaries at once to meet the plenipotentiaries of the non-German Powers and of the German Diet in a Conference to be held in London, the deliberations of which should have for their object the restoration of peace in the north of Europe. Such Conference might, Her Majesty's Government consider, hold its sittings without any suspension of the hostilities now in progress, and accordingly they do not propose such suspension as a condition of its being assembled.

If the Powers engaged in hostilities agree to this proposal, Her Majesty's Government will invite the Governments of France, Russia, and Sweden, as well as the Diet of the Germanic Confederation, to name representatives to take part in the proposed Conference.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

The register may here be closed; the nullity of all

* Sent also to Her Majesty's representatives at Paris, St. Petersburg, Berlin, Stockholm, and Frankfort.

our efforts in favour of Denmark is matter of history. To give a sketch of their nature and extent has been the author's aim in this chapter, and it seemed absolutely necessary to cite the actual documents, on the strength of which he has ventured to point attention to grave neglect of international obligations, as well as of European interests, by his own Government.

## CHAPTER VI.

CONDUCT OF AUSTRIA AND PRUSSIA IN THE DUCHIES—POPULAR AGITATION, HOW MET—PRUSSIAN CLAIMS AND AUSTRIAN RESISTANCE—DIET ATTEMPTS TO INTERFERE.

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AFTER the military occupation of the Duchies and the provisional government had been established, a pretence was made of allowing the popular voice to express its wishes as to the future relations and government of the land. Public meetings in Holstein took place at several places; and the wish to be united to the Germanic Confederation, under the sovereignty of the Prince of Augustenburg, was, on these occasions, the almost unanimously expressed desire of the population.

The Civil Commissioners of Austria and Prussia addressed an invitation to the clergy and civil servants of the two duchies, on December 7, to make known their opinions without prejudice to the hereditary claims put forward; and received the reply, that the already expressed convictions of the people as to the constitutional rights of the land were fully shared by them.

A small fraction only of landed proprietors, led by Baron Scheel Plessen, towards the end of December,

took part in an address to the allied sovereigns, which put forward the wish for annexation to Prussia—an expression of a tendency which at once elicited numerous and vehement declarations and addresses of counter-opinion.

On January 12, 1865, the Committee of the Schleswig-Holstein Union at Rendsburg put forth an address, with 60,800 signatures, protesting against all infractions of the ties subsisting between the Hereditary Prince of Augustenburg and the country, as well as against the breach of faith implied in any attempt to place a portion of the land under another rule; and declaring that perseverance in such a project would rouse the same obstinate resistance which the people had shown against Denmark.

The ill effects of provisional government were represented to the Civil Commissioners by the representatives of the towns and of the country districts, in a memorial dated February 19; and this was followed by a similar representation from the merchants and manufacturers, praying for the speedy termination of a state of things so prejudicial to the interests of commerce.

The Prussian Government acted in a decided manner against these demonstrations, and the proceedings of their governor soon showed that no overt assertion of independence would be suffered. A number of representatives of the two Duchies drew up a declaration, bearing date March 26, relating

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to specific concessions which their future Duke might make, without impairing the rights of the Duchies, and absolutely rejecting the chief part of the pretensions contained in a Prussian despatch of February 21, which had been addressed to the Austrian Government, and which required the Imperial co-operation in the system of government begun by Prussia.

A meeting of 117 delegates of Schleswig-Holstein associations acceded on April 19 to that declaration, and the Prince of Augustenburg did the like by a memorial dated March 31.

The Prussian despatch of February 21, above referred to, laid down the following conditions as absolutely required by the Prussian Government for assuring the interests of Prussia and Germany in the Duchies:—

1. Perpetual and indissoluble defensive and offensive alliance of the Duchies with Prussia, by which Prussia would bind herself to shield and protect them from all attack. The Duchies, on their side, were to place their entire armed force at the disposal of Prussia, and take the oath of military allegiance (*Fahneneid*) to the King.

2. The Federal obligations of the sovereign of the Duchies should subsist as heretofore.

3. Rendsburg to be a Federal fortress, and to remain for the present in Prussian possession.

4. Full sovereignty to be given Prussia over

the following territories for the defence of the Duchies.

*a.* The city of Sonderburg, with suitable territory on both sides of the Alsen Sound.

*b.* For the defence of Kiel, the fortress of Friedrichsort, with suitable territory.

*c.* At the mouths of the canal to be made betwixt the Baltic and North Sea, the necessary ground for establishing fortifications, and the decision as to the direction, the construction, and superintendence of the canal.

5. The Duchies, with all their territory, to form union with the Prussian customs system.

6. Union of the post and telegraph system of the Duchies with Prussia.

The handing over the Duchies to their future sovereign to follow upon the establishing and carrying out of all the preceding conditions. Should they not come into execution, Prussia to resume all the rights accruing to her from the Treaty of Vienna, and also to reserve her right to make good all these her pretensions in respect of the Duchies.

To this despatch Count Mensdorff replied, on March 5, that all these pretensions were at variance with Federal rights, and with those of the new member of the Confederation.

Count Mensdorff also demanded the re-establishment of the independence of both Duchies, and the

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regulation of their future relations to Prussia in consonance with the Federal compact.

The Diet at this period again intervened in the question, and on March 27 Bavaria, Saxony, and the Grand Duchy of Hesse conjointly made the following proposition in that assembly, to be voted upon within eight days:—

'Awaiting ulterior decision, the Diet confidently expects that the Governments of Austria and Prussia will now hand over the Duchy of Holstein to the Government of the Hereditary Prince of Schleswig-Holstein Augustenburg; and communicate with the Diet in reference to the agreement they have come to concerning the Duchy of Lauenburg.'

The grounds assigned by the three above-named Governments for this proposition were—

1. That, for the present, no tribunal existed competent to institute proceedings by means of which the Diet could decide as to the best entitled pretendent.

2. That it seemed necessary no longer to keep the suspended voice in the Diet* in abeyance.

3. By reference to the declaration of the great Powers in the London Conference, on May 28, recognising the Augustenburg succession as best founded.

* Holstein and Lauenburg, suspended by expulsion from Diet of M. Dirckinck Holmfeld, Danish envoy to Diet, on November 28, 1863.

4. That, by establishing the Hereditary Prince, the legal prosecution of other pretensions would not be inhibited, but rather the legal course duly rendered practicable, as the mode of Austrägal proceeding would thus lie open.

The President of the Diet, Baron Kübeck, voted for the project. M. de Savigny, the Prussian envoy, remarked that it appeared to him over-hurried, and required to be examined in committee.

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## CHAPTER VII.

FARTHER PROCEEDINGS IN DIET—PRUSSIA PROTESTS AGAINST DIET'S COMPETENCY—HER ARBITRARY CONDUCT IN DUCHIES—TREATY OF GASTEIN.

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THERE are good grounds for the belief that this proceeding on the part of the three States which made the proposition was secretly inspired by Austria. It was at all events so regarded by Prussia, and M. de Bismarck at once resolved to oppose the measure, by denying the right of the Diet even to handle the question.

By this time the schemes of this statesman were ripening. He was resolved to maintain his hold on the Duchies, and to seek at the same time plausible pretexts for the rupture with Austria which he had already absolutely decided on provoking. Hence the policy of Prussia in the Duchies speedily assumed an independence and total disregard of the condominate Power which was evidently devised to drive Austria to extremities.

In the Frankfort Diet, the vote on the proposition of the three States was taken on April 6, and was adverse to Prussia. M. de Savigny at once declared that the matter in hand was only prejudiced by such

an undue assumption of jurisdiction. In giving his vote against the proposition, his Excellency said he had the orders of his Government to state, that considering the claims of the Hereditary Prince of Augustenburg as unproven, Prussia protested against the pretensions of the Diet to make a binding decision on questions still in dispute. The Royal Government had rather specially to expect and require of the Diet that, before a Dietal decree laid down their views in any formal manner, they should institute an inquiry not only into the Augustenburg and all concurrent claims—that is to say, those of the House of Oldenburg—but of the rights which Prussia herself derived not only from the cession made by King Christian IX., but those also of the House of Brandenburg.

Austria qualified her vote by adhering to the proposition only so far as it could be executed without disturbing the subsisting understanding between Austria and Prussia.

The Prussian envoy added curtly, that his Government could in no wise contemplate the carrying out of this decree, and further protested against the recognition of any right on the part of the Diet to pronounce a final decision in the question. The reader will not fail to perceive the discrepancy of these opinions, from those once professed by M. de Bismarck, on the question of succession in the Duchies.

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It was sufficiently evident that no sort of interference in the mode of governing the Duchies would be endured by the Prussian Government, and this had been already practically shown by a notification issued on April 3, by Baron v. Zedlitz, that the Prussian naval station of the Baltic was transferred from Danzig to Kiel, by Royal command; and that the King had ordered that harbour to be fortified.

Baron Halbhuber, the Imperial Commissioner, protested against this notification of his Prussian colleague, and by way of asserting the condominate right of Austria, two of the Imperial vessels of war stationed at Geestemunde were ordered to go to Kiel.

In accordance, however, with the pacific policy of the Austrian Government, and the wish not to bring this conflict into too great prominence, that Cabinet gave assent to the establishment of the Prussian naval station at Kiel, on condition that the military forces of Prussia, far exceeding the requirements of a peace establishment, should be diminished by a number equal to that of the marine force to be cantoned at Kiel.

April 21. On April 20 and 21 took place the ceremony of laying the first stone of monuments to commemorate the taking of Düppel and Alsen. Austrian troops took part in the ceremony, and peculiar significance was at the time attached to the Prussian

royal rescript, published on this occasion, which was to the effect that, while the intended monument in honour of the brave who had fallen would keep up their memory with their comrades, it would also serve to animate their courage *if called on to defend the fruit of their victory with the sword.*

The flagrant differences of principle actuating the administration of the allied Governments in the Duchies were becoming daily more patent, and the patience and moderation of Austria were tested to a degree that manifestly could not be of much longer duration.

The sort of protection given by the Imperial Government to the Hereditary Prince of Augustenburg caused mortal offence to M. de Bismarck. The Prussian Government was always pressing for his exclusion from the country, and certain gentlemen who held nominal official appointments under the Prince, and were under Austrian protection, were subjected to all sorts of vexations and annoyance, while their nominal employments were represented as dangerous to Prussian interests.

Popular assemblies, not discouraged by the Austrians, whose milder sway and favour shown to the Prince of Augustenburg made their government acceptable, were an abhorrence to the Prussians, who sought to put them down by arrests and imprisonment of those who took part in them. This condition of latent and open antagonism could not long be

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kept up, and both sides perceived at length the absurdity and ill effects of a war of protests and counter-proceedings, and, wearying of it, fell upon a species of compromise, which took form in the Treaty of Gastein, binding them to occupy the Duchies separately, Austria holding Holstein, and Prussia Schleswig. Lauenburg was shortly afterwards ceded, in full sovereignty, to Prussia, Austria receiving a sum of 2,500,000 Danish dollars as an equivalent.

This important public act was negotiated and signed in Gastein by M. de Bismarck on behalf of Prussia and Count Blome for Austria. It bears date August 14, 1865, and was ratified by the two sovereigns on the 20th at Salzburg, where their Majesties met for that purpose. The treaty is textually as follows.

'ART. 1.—The common right obtained by the high contracting parties by Art. 3 of the Treaty of Vienna of the 30th of October, 1864, is transferred, as respects the Duchy of Holstein, to his Majesty the Emperor of Austria, and as respects the Duchy of Schleswig, to his Majesty the King of Prussia, without prejudice to the continuation of these rights of both Powers to the whole of both Duchies.

'ART. 2.—The high contracting parties will propose in the Diet the establishment of a German fleet, and appoint the port of Kiel as the Federal harbour. Until the putting in execution of the consequent Dietal decree, this port to be made use of by the

ships of war of both Powers, the commandership and police of the port to be exercised by Prussia. At Friederichsort, opposite the entrance, Prussia is authorised to erect the necessary defensive works, as well as to construct such marine establishments on the Holstein shore as are requisite for a port of war. These fortifications and establishments are to be likewise under Prussian command, and the Prussian marines and sailors required for garrisoning and protection thereof may be quartered in Kiel and the vicinity.

'ART. 3.—The high contracting parties will propose at Frankfort to establish Rendsburg as a Federal fortresss. Until the Diet has regulated the mode of garrisoning this fortress, the garrison is to be composed of Imperial Austrian and Royal Prussian troops, with the command alternating yearly, on the 1st of July.

'ART. 4.—Until the carrying out of the partition stipulated by Art. 1 of this Convention, the Prussian Government shall have possession of two military roads through Holstein; the one from Lübeck to Kiel, the other from Hamburg to Rendsburg. Special regulations as to the places of halt are to be made as soon as possible by a separate convention, as well as for the transporting and providing for the troops: until this is done the existing regulations for the Prussian march-routes through Hanover to be in force.

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'ART. 5.—The Prussian Government has the privilege of using a telegraphic wire for communicating between Kiel and Rendsburg, and the right for its Post-office carriages, with its own employés, to circulate on both railway lines throughout the Duchy of Holstein.

'Inasmuch as the construction of a direct railroad from Lübeck to Kiel across the boundary of Schleswig is not yet assured, the concession for the same shall be granted on the usual conditions if requisition is made by Prussia—so far as regards Holstein territory—without any demand of sovereign rights, as respects the railroad, on the part of Prussia.

'ART. 6.—The high contracting parties hold the common intent, that the Duchies shall accede to the German customs union. Each Duchy, until further arrangement, maintains the system of customs hitherto subsisting, with equal partition of revenue, until union with the Zollverein. In case it seems expedient to the Royal Prussian Government to open negotiations for the accession of the Duchies to the Zollverein, pending the duration of the separation which has been agreed upon by Art. 1 of the present Treaty, his Majesty the Emperor of Austria is ready to name a plenipotentiary to take part in such negotiation.

'ART. 7.—Prussia has the right of directing through Holstein territory the intended North Sea Canal, which is to be built after the plans of the

technical surveys instituted by the Royal Government; that is to say, Prussia has the right of prescribing the direction and the dimensions of the Canal, to acquire—by way of expropriation and for payment of its value—the land required for the construction, to direct the building, to have the supervision and maintenance of the Canal, and to exercise the faculty of enacting all regulatory ordonnances.

'No transit duties or imposts on vessel or cargo, beyond those similar normal ship-tolls for use of the Canal which Prussia will establish for the vessels of all nations, are to be exacted upon the whole extent of the Canal.

'ART. 8.—This Convention makes no change in the stipulations of the Vienna Treaty of 30th of October, 1864, as to the financial services to be respectively at the charge of the Duchies, of Denmark, and of Austria and Prussia; but the Duchy of Lauenburg shall be freed from all contribution to war costs. The repartition of these costs between the Duchies of Holstein and Schleswig shall be made in proportion to the population.

'ART. 9.—His Majesty the Emperor of Austria gives over to his Majesty the King of Prussia the rights accruing to him, by the oft-cited Treaty of Vienna, to the Duchy of Lauenburg, in exchange for which cession the Royal Prussian Government binds itself to pay the Imperial Austrian Government the

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sum of two millions five hundred thousand Danish rixthalers, payable in Berlin in Prussian specie, within four weeks after ratification of the present Treaty by their Majesties the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia.

'ART. 10.—The execution of the hereinbefore-agreed-upon partition of the joint sovereignty shall follow as speedily as possible upon the ratification of this Convention by their Majesties the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia, and at latest be carried out by the 15th of September.

'The hitherto subsisting common commandership-in-chief shall be dissolved at latest on the 15th of September, after termination of the evacuation of Schleswig by the Austrian and of Holstein by the Prussian troops.

'Signed at Gastein, the 14th of August, 1865,

(Signed) 'G. BLOME, M.P.

(Signed) 'V. BISMARCK, M.P.'

## CHAPTER VIII.

EFFECTS OF TREATY OF GASTEIN—ITALIAN MISTRUST—ENGLISH AND FRENCH CIRCULARS—NAVAL DEMONSTRATION—M. DE BISMARCK'S POLICY—PROCEEDINGS IN THE DUCHIES—PROCLAMATIONS OF THE TWO GOVERNORS.

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PRUSSIA was not yet quite prepared for war, and to gain time the Austrian Government was to be further hoodwinked. It may also be surmised that, before this epoch, the utility of the Italian alliance had presented itself to M. de Bismarck's mind, though no absolute proof exists that any serious negotiations for the offensive and defensive alliance concluded between the two States in April, 1866, had been entered upon during any long time before they were brought to conclusion. It is, however, certain that Herr v. Usedom had already sounded the ground at Florence. The Treaty of Gastein was then regarded in Italy with feelings of deep mistrust, while by the Government of France and by our own it was publicly censured in circulars to the representatives of either State at Foreign Courts; by that of France it was characterised as 'an abuse of power, perverting all notions of right, and the conscience of the people.'* About this period, also,

* M. Drouyn de L'Huys' Circular of August 29, 1865.

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the English fleet was recalled from the Mediterranean, and the futile demonstration made of combined manœuvres with the French squadron at Cherbourg.

It has been previously said that the resolution to attempt the forcible expulsion of Austria from the Confederation took date in M. de Bismarck's mind from the meeting of the sovereigns in Frankfort in 1863. Already, in 1862, while exercising for a brief period the functions of Prussian representative in Paris, he had doubtless found occasion to broach his views on German affairs to the Emperor Napoleon, and had taken special care to make Prussian policy agreeable to France, in the matter of the Treaty of Commerce, so soon as, by taking office at Berlin, the power of influencing his country's counsels fell into his hands. In 1864, a meeting took place between him, then holding office as Prussian premier, and M. Rouher, at Carlsbad. Some fractions of the many conversations which are said to have there passed between the two statesmen on European affairs have taken their place in the domain of public belief, and M. de Bismarck's habit of speaking his thoughts is so well known that credence may be given to utterances attributed to him which from almost any other person living would be counted as extravagances of indiscretion and audacity.

Of this nature was the suggestion which he

is generally supposed to have thrown out, that France might indemnify herself by taking possession of Belgium for the contemplated Prussian aggrandisements in Germany, and those to be made at the expense of Denmark.

M. de Bismarck's aim was to impress the French minister with the idea that the advantages he was aiming at for his own country might be compensated to France by equivalent territorial acquisitions. Whether the bait held out was a possible cession of the coal basin of the Sarre, of the duchy of Luxemburg, or even the prospect of active assistance in annexing Belgium to France, is immaterial. The general impression sought to be produced, that Prussia was by no means hostile, that she might indeed be helpful to France, was adroitly produced, and subsequent conversations with the Emperor at Biarritz took, there can be little doubt, the same direction, and confirmed the effect.

M. de Bismarck on his second visit to Biarritz had indeed met with some difficulties. The French circular, referring to the Treaty of Gastein, had been followed by the meeting of the English and French fleets at Cherbourg, and the King of Prussia raised objections to his ministers taking a journey which, under such circumstances, seemed incompatible with the dignity of Prussia. In this conjuncture, seeing the indispensable need of removing the mistrust of the Emperor of the French, M. de Bismarck contrived

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to induce the French Cabinet to modify the terms of their circular; and the King's consent being thereupon given, he went at once to Paris, and thence continued his journey to Biarritz.

His success was complete—how brought about can only be vaguely surmised. One point, however, may be shrewdly guessed at with tolerable certainty —that the alliance of Prussia with Italy, for the purpose of war with Austria, was promised. The Emperor did not insist on any positive engagements for contingent advantages to accrue to France. He had not that superb confidence in the ability of Prussia to vanquish Austria, even with Italian aid, indulged in by M. de Bismarck. It is much more likely that he looked forward to the exhaustion of the combatants, when both or either of them might appeal to his not altogether disinterested good offices to appease their strife. The Emperor foresaw, however, with tolerable certainty, the probable liberation of Venetia, an object he had greatly at heart; and it is perfectly well known that M. de Bismarck returned to Berlin with such assurances of sympathy and absolutely benevolent neutrality on the part of France, that he could make his arrangements for employing the Rhenish garrisons, and leaving Sarre Louis, Coblenz, Luxemburg, and Cologne partially stripped of artillery, and with a small force of Landwehr for their protection; all which would have been impossible had he been insecure as to the dispositions of France.

From this retrospective and prospective review of the policy of the chief actor in this great political drama, we have to return to the current of events as they were shaping themselves for the impending conflict in the Duchies and at Frankfort.

Prussia, in execution of the convention, named Lieutenant-General Baron v. Manteuffell Governor of Schleswig; and Austria placed the Lieutenant-Field-Marshal Baron v. Gablenz in the similar post in Holstein. The civil commissioners remained in their offices, Herr v. Hoffmann taking the place of Baron Halbhuber.

The new Holstein Government, with its seat at Kiel, was installed on September 15.

Baron v. Gablenz's proclamation to the people of Holstein, said: 'Keeping aloof from political complications, I am solely inspired by the wish sedulously to promote the development of the country's weal; a stranger to all party, and desirous of anticipating the just wishes of the people, supported by their confidence.'

Lieutenant-General Manteuffel's proclamation was as follows:—

'*People of the Duchy of Schleswig.*

'By the Treaty of Gastein, you are transferred to a separate Government, under the authority of the King of Prussia.

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'The phrase "Prussian Government" includes in itself justice, public order, and the promotion of the public good.

'While from this day forth, by command of His Majesty the King of Prussia, I assume the government of the Duchy, and promise you at the same time complete attention to your peculiar interests, I expect from you obedience to His Majesty's orders, and confidence.'

The Royal Patent for taking possession of the Duchy of Lauenburg was published on the same day, September 28, and Count Arnim Boitzenburgh assumed the government, and received the homage of the authorities to his sovereign.

## CHAPTER IX.

THE DIET MAKES FARTHER VAIN ATTEMPTS TO INTERVENE IN THE QUESTION OF THE DUCHIES—JOINT NOTES OF AUSTRIA AND PRUSSIA TO SENATE OF FRANKFORT—THE HEREDITARY PRINCE OF AUGUSTENBURG THREATENED BY GENERAL MANTEUFFEL—PUBLIC MEETING AT ALTONA —M. DE BISMARCK'S DESPATCH.

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We now approach the last period of activity of the Diet of Frankfort. That body continued to make various ineffectual efforts to assert its authority, which were foiled without much difficulty; and especially in all that related to the Duchies, Prussia soon gave it to be unmistakeably understood, that her will was to be the sole law for the future government of those provinces.

The hands of Austria were tied by the Treaty of Gastein, which, it must be confessed, the Imperial Government faithfully observed, while M. de Bismarck was soon known to have spoken slightingly of that convention, and there were already other serious indications (besides the ordonnance of March 11) that Prussia had no grave scruples as to emancipating herself from strict adhesion to the conditions it imposed.

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The conduct of the Imperial Government in accepting a pecuniary indemnity for her rights in Lauenburg was, at the same time, the subject of much comment; and, in the opinion of many, Austria was sharply censured as having shown a mercenary spirit, and compromised her national dignity.

In the Frankfort Diet, meanwhile, Bavaria, Saxony, and Grand-Ducal Hesse made an effort to assert their still acknowledged right of interference, and as a rider to their proposition of March 27, moved the Diet to request the Governments of Austria and Prussia, that they would be pleased to inform the Diet of the results of their proceedings, and what were their further views for the solution of the question of the Elbe Duchies: whether they were willing to call together a representation of the Duchy of Holstein, together with a similar representation for the Duchy of Schleswig, with the object of concurring in that solution; and at what period this convocation, which appeared highly desirable, could be expected to take place? The Diet was further moved to express the desire that the two Powers would effect the reception of the Duchy of Schleswig into the Germanic Confederation; and finally, to signify its willingness to forego payment of the expenses of execution by the Duchy of Schleswig, in case the said Duchy stood charged with the war costs, or in case a proportion of the same was

undertaken by those confederate States which had not taken any share in the war.

In answer to this motion the two allied governments, on August 24, laid the Treaty of Gastein before the Assembly, with the assurance that the Diet might feel convinced of the earnest desire of Austria and Prussia to bring about a definitive solution of the question of the Duchies, and felt certain of arriving at a result that would be satisfactory to all parties concerned; the Diet might look for this result in all confidence. Aug. 24.

This declaration was considered by the Diet as unsatisfactory. They found that the Provisional Government was a departure from the principle of the inseparability of the two Duchies, and were dissatisfied that provision for participation in the final settlement of the Government by the people, or their representatives, had not found the slightest mention, either in the Convention of Gastein, or in the subsequent explanations of August 24. The three Governments therefore made this motion:—

1. That the two Governments should permit a general assembly of representatives of Holstein, freely elected, to be summoned, and to take part in the solution of the questions still pending, for the definitive organisation of the Elbe Duchies.

2. That they should work together for the incorporation of Schleswig in the Germanic Confederation.

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This motion was discussed on November 18, when a joint declaration was made by the Austrian and Prussian representatives, to the effect that their two Governments had already expressed the intention of considering the convocation of the assembly of the States of Holstein. No change had as yet taken place in these intentions, since the exercise of sovereign rights had been transferred to His Majesty the Emperor of Austria. The choice of time for convoking the States must however remain the subject of further consideration, and the present moment did not appear opportune. Both Governments would in due time willingly be prepared, when the matter was far enough advanced, to make further communications.

On paragraph 2 of the motion, the two Powers declared that decisive reasons existed for their not entering on the question.

Hereupon followed a declaration from the three States which had made the motion, that they took note of the decision of the majority of the Diet to pass over in silence that the Diet itself, and the Prince entitled by hereditary right, were not permitted to have a voice in the solution of the question of the Duchies, but that as long as there was no prospect of the Diet's taking part in a decision in which they had the right to participate, they must consider their mandate and activity in the Assembly as terminated, but must confine themselves to an outspoken and

decided protest against all and every decision at variance with these principles.

The declaration jointly made in the Diet by Austria and Prussia called forth by the motion of Bavaria, Saxony, and Grand-Ducal Hesse above referred to, was the last step which the two allied Powers took in common in that assembly.

They had somewhat earlier, namely on the 6th and 8th of October, caused notes to be handed to the Senate of Frankfort in reference to a meeting of delegates to the Frankfort Parliament of 1848 and other members of existing representative assemblies in Germany which took place at Frankfort on October 1, to deliberate on the general state of German politics, and more especially on the question of the Elbe Duchies. The notes of the two Powers were not identical, that of Prussia being the stronger, but both censured the Frankfort Government for having permitted this meeting, and enjoined the Senate to prevent similar assemblages for the future, not without an intimation that if the Senate failed to do so, the two Powers would take the matter into their own hands. The Frankfort Government boldly maintained their right of independence; and when subsequently Prussia was disposed to action, Austria refused to participate in any coercive steps against the free State.

These proceedings of the Diet, and the two last instances of joint action taken at Frankfort by Austria

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and Prussia, are somewhat prolix to relate, but their significance will escape no one.

The moderation of Austria in her mode of governing Holstein was in direct contrast with her stringent conduct towards the Diet, and there can be no other interpretation of these harsh proceedings than that the Prussian Cabinet availed itself to the utmost of the hold given by the Treaty of Gastein; and in the matter of the Senate of Frankfort, the harmless meeting of German Liberals was held up to the Imperial Government as one of those dangerous democratic movements which it was their mutual and bounden duty and interest, as established Governments, to suppress.

From this epoch the relations between the two Powers became gradually more and more strained, and the policy of Prussia assumed an irritating character which it was impossible for her ally to misinterpret.

The judgment of the Prussian Crown lawyers on the succession question was pronounced in the course of the month of October.

Their decision set aside all claims save those derived from the cession made by the King of Denmark in the Treaty of Vienna, which in their judgment did away with the pretensions of the Prince of Augustenburg even if they ever had any basis of hereditary right.

The Prussian Government was accused of great

want of courtesy in never having communicated this judgment to the Cabinet of Vienna.

General Manteuffel meanwhile had been exercising his governmental powers rigorously, and had either suppressed attempted public meetings, or punished those who took part in them.

The Prince of Augustenburg was himself threatened with disagreeable consequences, because on an occasional visit which he made to Eckenförde certain acts of homage had been tendered to him by a part of the population.

In Holstein the rule of Austria in the hands of Baron Gablenz was less absolute, and exercised with much consideration and forbearance. He sought at the same time to avoid giving reasonable ground of complaint to the neighbouring Governments.

Thus the Austrian Government was informed of a project for assembling delegates of Holstein and Schleswig associations, on January 23, in Altona, and issued a warning against the holding of any such meeting, as calculated to bring new dangers on the country. Upon an assurance, however, being given, by the promoters of the meeting, that all agitating questions should be avoided, the Austrian Government did not prevent the meeting from taking place.

This occurrence drew forth a note from the Berlin Cabinet, dated January 26, to their envoy at Vienna, complaining of the conduct of the Holstein Government as seriously impairing the relations of the two

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States. M. de Bismarck appealed to the recollections of the meetings of Gastein and Salzburg, and remarked that he had allowed himself to hope that at that period Austria was not only convinced of the necessity of combating the Revolution, but had agreed as to the mode of combat. The conduct of Austria in the affair of the notes to the Frankfort Senate had already somewhat shaken this agreeable persuasion; matters, however, now assumed a far graver aspect. The conduct of the Holstein Government could only be designated as aggressive. It ill became the Imperial Government openly to use against Prussia the same means of agitation against which they fought together in Frankfort. If at Vienna it was thought that they might tranquilly contemplate the revolutionary transformation of the people of Holstein, so distinguished for their conservative spirit, Prussia was resolved not to act in a similar manner.

The Treaty of Gastein had indeed provisionally divided the administration of the two Duchies. But Prussia had the right of claiming that Austria should maintain Holstein *in statu quo*, just as much as Prussia was bound to keep Schleswig in that state.

The Royal Government saw no difficulty in putting an end to the agitation, the scandals and injuries to the principle of Royalty going on in the Duchies. The Prussian Government intreated the Vienna Cabinet to weigh the situation and to act accordingly.

If a negative or evasive reply was given, Prussia would at least be assured that influenced by her ancient antagonism, Austria could not durably act together with her. This conviction would be a painful one, but Prussia needed to see clearly.

Should it be rendered impracticable for her to act with Austria, she would at least gain full freedom for her policy, and might make such use thereof as suited her interests.

## CHAPTER X.

THE HEREDITARY PRINCE OF AUGUSTENBURG—REPLY OF AUSTRIAN GOVERNMENT TO M. DE BISMARCK'S NOTE OF JANUARY 26, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES—OPEN BREACH IN RELATIONS OF THE TWO GOVERNMENTS—AUSTRIAN CONFIDENTIAL CIRCULAR TO CONFEDERATE STATES.

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THE name of the Hereditary Prince of Augustenburg as claimant of the sovereignty of the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein under the title of Duke, occurs so repeatedly in this narrative, that some more special notice may be expected of the grounds on which his Highness founded his pretensions, and of the way in which they were put aside, than is to be gathered from the mere recital of events as they occurred. It seems needless here to trace the matter further back than to the cession of his own rights, made in favour of the Hereditary Prince, by Duke Christian of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Augustenburg, bearing date September 1865, by which the Duke abdicates all his own rights and title in favour of the Prince, his eldest son.*

This is not the proper place for discussing the validity of his Highness's claim; but on whatever legal

* *Vide* Appendix, No. X.

basis it may have been founded, there can be no question but that such right as can be derived from election, and the almost unanimous voice of the people of the Duchies, gave him a title, if all others were wanting, which few Englishmen would be inclined to dispute.

It must not, however, be passed over in silence, that, in the year 1852, Duke Christian had affixed his signature to an act, renouncing for himself and for his family all pretensions to the sovereignty of the Duchies, in consideration of a pecuniary indemnity, to be paid him by the Danish Government; and that he bound himself also, and engaged for his posterity, that neither he nor they would disturb or interfere with such arrangements as the Danish Government thought fit to make for the future Government of the Duchies.

It was argued, then, that unless the Government of Denmark made default, by not fulfilling their engagements to pay the stipulated price of the Duke's cession, his Highness was estopped from any such act of abdication in his son's favour as that under which the Hereditary Prince made his claim to the Sovereignty. Be this as it may, there can be no doubt that by the organ of the Germanic Confederation, by the population of the Duchies, and finally in their individual sovereign character (though, as if to render the act more solemn, conjointly) in the Conference of London, before the chief Powers of Europe

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there assembled, the Prince's claim to the sovereignty of the Elbe Duchies was acknowledged as the best founded by Austria and Prussia.

It can hardly then be looked on as a pretension that the Prince considered himself legitimately seated on the Ducal throne; and the surprise and indignation felt by himself, and by the majority of his supporters, when Prussia began to question his right, and ended by ignoring it altogether, may well be conceived.

How this was effected, the course of this record will speedily show; but it is time to return from this digression, and to give the reply made by Count Mensdorff to the imperious note of M. de Bismarck with which the last chapter concluded.

Feb. 7. His Excellency wrote to the following effect under date of February 7. That it was notorious that neither one nor the other Power could alone dispose of the future of the Duchies. The cause of the war had not been Prussian claims, but *confederate rights*, and those of the Duchies. The Imperial Government had therefore always held it to be fitting, as well for itself as for both the great Powers, to connect the new form of political constitution which might arise from the war, with the obligation of a free understanding between the two Courts. Never had the Court of Vienna ceased to acknowledge that such an understanding must afford just satisfaction of Prussian state interests. At the same time the Imperial

Government was subject to no control in the Government of Holstein. The obligation in this respect imposed by the Treaty of Gastein relates for the time being to the unimpaired maintenance of the *substance*; if it involved control of the mode of dealing with it, the Gastein Treaty itself would appear to be useless.

As to the imputation of impairing the conservative spirit of the Holstein population, the Imperial Government could tranquilly appeal to the judgment of all Europe, where it was known that the existing dominant aims in Holstein were identical with those which prevailed at the time of the Convention of Gastein, and long before that period, and from which the resistance of the Duchies to Denmark derived its strength.

With reference to the complaints made of what had passed at Altona, Prussia was trenching closely on requiring the inhibition of all public meetings within the Confederation, a proceeding from which, however, she had hitherto shrunk. This despatch further called the attention of Prussia to the usual state of their relations, showing that, as the ally of Prussia, Austria, to her own prejudice, had dealt harshly with the middle States, a matter on which there could be no dispute.

Shortly after the receipt of this despatch, M. de Bismarck informed the Austrian envoy that the state of things contemplated by the conclusion of his note

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of January 26 was now established, that is to say, '*that convinced of the impossibility of longer acting with Austria, Prussia resumed her liberty of action, and would only consult her own interests.*'

The open breach which M. de Bismarck had been preparing was therefore established, and from henceforth no other relations subsisted between the two States than such as usually precede a state of hostility.

Assured of the neutral attitude of France, of Great Britain, and of Russia, the Prussian Minister was on the point of concluding an alliance with Italy, and no longer thought it necessary to conceal his intentions.

March 3. On March 3, Count Karolyi, the Imperial envoy at Berlin, made a declaration that Austria would not suffer any alteration in the Provisional Government to be made to her prejudice, or be satisfied by any definitive state of things being established at variance with her honour, her interests, and her position in Germany.

Similar communications were made by the Austrian Cabinet to the Governments of England and of France.

March 11. On March 11, a decree in the name of the King of Prussia was made public, which may be regarded as a threatening reply to Count Karolyi's declaration. It enacted the punishment of imprisonment with hard labour for any attempt within the Schleswig-

Holstein territory, calculated to impair his own or the Emperor of Austria's sovereign rights. The first section was thus worded :— CHAP. X.

'We, William, by the grace of God, King of Prussia, &c., &c., &c., ordain as follows for the Duchy of Schleswig :—Section 1. Any attempt forcibly to set up, in either of the Duchies, a governmental authority in opposition to the rights of sovereignty appertaining to us, and to His Majesty the Emperor of Austria, by virtue of the Treaty of Vienna of the 30th of October, 1864, and by the Convention of Gastein of the 14th of August, 1865, shall incur the punishment of confinement in the house of correction (*i.e. with hard labour*) from five to ten years. The punishment is incurred as soon as any act is done in the nature of an overt criminal proceeding.'

This decree was tantamount to declaring the abolition of the Treaty of Gastein, as the King of Prussia had no title to interfere in the government of Holstein.

On March 16, Count Mensdorff addressed the following secret circular despatch to all members of the Germanic Confederation :— March 16.

'It is the intention of the Imperial Government, in case the proceedings of Prussia lead to an open rupture, to appeal to the intervention of the Diet, on the basis of Article XI. of the Act of Confederation, and Article XIX. of the final Act of Vienna, and at the same time to hand over to the Diet the

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making of all farther decisions for regulating the Schleswig-Holstein question.

'In view of the preparations for war made by Prussia, His Imperial Majesty's Government considers that it can only cover its own responsibility by putting a direct question at Berlin. Count Karolyi is therefore instructed to inquire of the Prussian Minister, and to demand a positive answer, whether or no the Court of Berlin has the intention of bringing the Treaty of Gastein to a violent rupture, and of breaking the peace guaranteed by established law between members of the Germanic Confederation.

'His Excellency will add that, by these inquiries, the Imperial Government means nothing provocatory, but merely to attain assurance of the intent of the Prussian Government, which they trust they have misjudged. If this interpretation, which can no longer be delayed, elicits an unsatisfactory or evasive reply, the Imperial Government will deem that the moment is come when Austria must regard her good understanding with Prussia as shattered, and must take the initiative in the Diet of the measures necessary for guarding the menaced peace of the Confederation, and for preventing or repelling any use of force.

'Austria will then, without delay, make declaration in Frankfort to the following effect:—

'The high Confederates of His Imperial Majesty well know what special value the Imperial Court

attached to the maintenance of a good understanding with His Majesty the King of Prussia, in the negotiations for the political future of the Elbe Duchies.

'The Emperor has striven assiduously, and in the most conciliatory spirit, to find a solution of the Schleswig-Holstein difficulty in union with Prussia. His Majesty will always derive the deepest satisfaction from the conviction that, both as the sovereign of Austria and a Prince of the Confederation, he has never refused any reasonable concession, but has given every possible proof of a conciliatory spirit, for the sake of maintaining that harmony between Prussia and Austria which is the most natural pledge both of internal peace and of the external good and security of the German fatherland. To the deepest sorrow, however, of the Imperial Court, the negotiations hitherto held with the Prussian Court have remained without the wished-for result. The Royal Prussian Government has thought fit to advance pretensions irreconcilable not only with the interests and authority (*Machtstellung*) of the Austrian Empire, but with the national interests of Germany, and the constitution of the Germanic Confederation. The Minister President is therefore instructed to acquaint the Diet that the Imperial Government must regard its efforts to bring about a solution of the question of the Duchies in good understanding with Prussia, as defeated, and must move the

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Assembly, which is always assured of its recognition, to submit the whole affair to the Diet's constitutional decision. The Imperial Government, however, does not confine itself to this explanation.

'Attention is called to the language of the Prussian Cabinet, and to reports of military preparations in Prussia, causing wide-spread apprehension of danger to the public peace of Germany. The Imperial Government nourishes the hope that knowledge of the real intentions of Prussia will suffice fully to dissipate these fears; not having succeeded, however, in eliciting satisfactory explanations from the Berlin Cabinet, the envoy finds himself in the necessity of publicly appealing in the Confederate Assembly to the engagements taken by all members of the Confederation by Article XI. of the Diet's constitution and Article XIX. of the final Act of Vienna.

'It is the duty of the entire Confederation to take care that quarrels betwixt members of the Confederation should not be followed up by the use of force; the Imperial Government, then, only fulfils a duty in giving timely warning to the Diet to direct its views to maintaining the peace of the Confederation. If the danger of independent (*Selbsthülfe*) action does not exist, the Diet will at once obtain such wholly tranquillising assurances as a Government adhering to law and to treaties like that of his Majesty the King of Prussia would assuredly not withhold from its confederates.

'The preceding will be the substance of the first Imperial declaration to the Diet; and the Imperial Government expects that the . . . . Government will beforehand instruct its envoy at Frankfort, immediately after the Austrian declaration, to vote for making a summons or a request to Prussia to declare her intentions. In case the dissent of individual envoys hinders the matter being discussed and determined in the same sitting as is allowed by the regulations, the overture on this matter can at least be decided in a closely following sitting.

'At the same time, or after receipt of the Prussian explanation, the affair must be laid before the Holstein-Lauenburg Committee, the duty of intervention in conformity with Article XI. of the Diet's constitution being also intrusted to that Committee.

'If the danger of a rupture of peace becomes more imminent, and if there should be positive indications of a contemplated use of force, or if the orders for mobilizing are actually issued, it is clear that the stress of the situation cannot be remedied by the mere attempts of a committee at intervention. The necessity will then exist of having recourse instantly and decidedly to those steps which, based on Article XIX. of the final Act, are meant to arrest all independent action; and in case such should have had a beginning, to put an end to it.

'In view of a threatened attack by Prussia, this can

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be effected in no other way than by putting the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th army corps on the war footing, and by placing them in communication with the Austrian army. The Imperial Government trusts therefore that, the case arising, the . . . . Government will be prepared to vote at Frankfort for such a decision,' &c., &c.

## CHAPTER XI.

COUNT KAROLYI ASKS IF PRUSSIA MEANS TO BREAK TREATY OF GASTEIN —M. DE BISMARCK'S DIFFICULTIES WITH KING OF PRUSSIA— AUSTRIA REJECTS OVERTURES OF ITALY FOR CESSION OF VENETIA —M. DE BISMARCK'S DESPATCH.

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March 16.

At the time this confidential circular was addressed by Count Mensdorff to the Confederate Governments, Count Karolyi received orders to ask the Prussian premier if he meant to break the Treaty of Gastein? His Excellency gave a decided *No* for reply, but is said to have added, '*If I had the intention, do you imagine I should tell you?*' Determined to provoke Austria to act in some way that should put her in the wrong, M. de Bismarck did not find it an easy task to irritate the Imperial Government beyond endurance.

He also had difficulties in bringing the King to give assent to the open breach for which he, his prime minister, was labouring. The Royal mind was strongly wrought upon in the opposite direction by the absolutist party, at the head of which may be named the Queen Dowager; but, by little and little, all these obstacles were overcome; and the King was persuaded to look on Austria as an

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enemy that was plotting the ruin of Prussia, conspiring with his confederates, and allying herself with liberalism in Holstein.

Austria had about this time let slip an occasion for detaching Italy from the projected Prussian alliance, which, however it may be excused on the plea of justifiable national pride, was another fatal political error on her part.

Secret overtures were made at Vienna for the cession of Venetia by purchase. The Emperor, conceiving his military honour involved, utterly rejected any proposition of the kind, and Count Mensdorff declared in London and Paris that the Imperial Government would rather risk a double war than cede Venetia for any consideration.

At nearly the same period that Count Karolyi addressed his celebrated interpellation to M. de Bismarck, he is reported to have informed his Government that he considered war inevitable. It seems scarcely credible that the Imperial Government could for a long time previously have blinded itself to the danger. M. de Bismarck, as has already been frequently said, made no secret of his intention to attempt to expel Austria from Germany, and the Prussian army reforms had, for more than four years past, taken dimensions that might reasonably have inspired mistrust, when the Imperial Cabinet well knew the dispositions of the statesman who was directing the policy of

Prussia, and shaping her destinies. The new organisation of the vast military force of Prussia, carried on principally under the initiative of General v. Roon, the Minister of War, made the army more formidable in numbers, in efficiency, and especially in the rapidity with which the various army corps could be assembled and made movable. This will be shown by details drawn from authentic sources in future pages;* it suffices for the present to state that, with a population inferior to that of Austria, Prussia was able to bring into the field, within three weeks, a larger force than Austria could assemble in two months, supposing both States to start from their peace establishment: nor must it be forgotten that the Prussian infantry and cavalry were almost entirely armed with breech-loading firelocks—a system not hitherto tested on any large scale, but which the experience of 1866 showed to be an advantage of the most serious importance, and which some calculations have estimated as tripling the offensive and defensive means of the troops possessed of such an arm.

Slowly and cautiously, after receipt of Count Karolyi's warning, Austria commenced military preparations. But they were carried on hesitatingly, and, though they immediately drew the attention of Prussia, were hardly of a nature to give any serious alarm. Still they supplied M. de Bismarck with

* *Vide* Chapter XXV.

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the pretext he had long been waiting for—to be able to accuse Austria of making the first openly hostile demonstration.

The Prussian premier now at once determined on striking his first open blow at the Diet, and addressed the following confidential circular to all the States of
March 24. the Confederation, bearing date March 24. The despatch was textually as follows, and is given, as well as the preceding one of Count Mensdorff, notwithstanding their length, because each document marks an epoch in the progress of events, and each in its form and purport is highly characteristic of the Governments from which they emanated:—

'When in August last year the Convention of Gastein was concluded, we ventured to hope that a basis had been gained, by which a solution of the Schleswig-Holstein question might be arrived at, without prejudice to the friendly understanding of both States. Already, however, by January of this year, matters had gone so far in Holstein, through the conduct of Austria, that we had to address serious complaints to the Imperial Austrian Government under date of the 20th and 26th of January.

'Our grounds of complaint are, that Austria has persisted in acting in direct opposition to the principles on which the Treaty of Vienna and the Gastein Convention were based. By that treaty, in common with us, Austria accepted from King

Christian IX. the cession of the Duchies which were in His Majesty's possession, in consequence of the succession to the throne established in 1853, and recognised by Austria. The land then belonged to the King, our august sovereign, in common with his Majesty the Emperor of Austria; yet the acts of the Austrian Government in Holstein are directly calculated to hand it over to the Prince of Augustenburg, who has no right thereto, and this without Prussia's assent, and although Austria herself had formerly contested his claims in the most decided way. We laid these complaints before the Imperial Government in language as friendly as it was clear, and requested that, in the interest of our intimate relations, and the unimpaired maintenance of the *status quo* stipulated in Vienna and Gastein, such proceedings might be suspended. We added that, should our request produce no result, we must regard it, with regret, as a symptom of the dispositions of Austria towards us which would deprive us of all reliance on the solidity of our alliance.

'In so unwelcome a state of things, we can but regard the phase of intimate relations which had endured for two years as having come to an end, and must seek in other directions to secure ourselves against these and other manifest symptoms of the ill-will of the Austrian Cabinet towards Prussia.

'To this communication, made in the most conciliatory spirit, and in friendly form, we received, in

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a despatch from Vienna of the 7th of February, a negative reply.

'We have thought it fitting thereupon not to continue the correspondence. To Count Karolyi, however, in reply to a question put by him in our first interview, after receipt of the despatch of the 7th of February, we spoke to this effect, as to the importance we attached to the Austrian reply, that, instead of the character of intimacy which our relations with Austria had assumed of late years, they would now revert to the precise point at which they stood before the Danish war, no better, but not worse, than with any other foreign Power.

'No syllable was uttered on this occasion referring to war, and all menace of war was as far from our intent then as now.

'Since this period—that is, since the communication of the despatch of the 7th of February—both Powers have observed mutual silence. On our part nothing has happened to alter the situation. We see, however, with surprise that Austria is preparing for a great war, and is at the same time reproaching us with intentions of disturbing the peace. Considerable forces, together with artillery and warlike stores, are being directed from the eastern and southern provinces of Austria, towards the north and west, in the direction of our frontier. Regiments are placed on the war footing, so that within a short time a strong force will be collected on

our frontier, totally devoid of all counter-dispositions. In the Annex your Excellency will find details of these proceedings. What is the object of Austria in these armaments? Is it her intention to compel us to continue our close alliance with her, or by spontaneous overtures to induce us to break our silence? In either case we have the right of defending our freedom of action, and in the threatening attitude which Austria suddenly assumes, we can but see a new and convincing indication of hostile dispositions towards us, which only await opportunity to find expression in deeds. Up to the present moment we have not made the slightest counter-armaments; no man has been called to the ranks, no movement of troops has taken place, no preparations have been made. In the face of the Austrian dispositions, however, we on our side can no longer delay, lest the situation of 1850 should repeat itself, when an Austrian army on the war footing stood menacingly on our frontier before we were prepared.

'The presumption that the actual preparations of Austria are merely defensive does not suffice to tranquillise us as to their threatening character, since no step has been taken by us which should induce Austria to be thinking of her defence. We apprehend that the language of Austria will change as soon as a decided preponderance in armament shall have given her the advantage. When, therefore, we also find ourselves compelled to order armaments,

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we can with more right than Austria assume that they bear a purely defensive character, and are solely called for by the suspicious armaments of Austria. If the situation becomes one of greater risk from warlike forces being arranged against each other, and the peril of conflict greater, we are not therefore those to whom blame should be imputed. It is impossible that we can allow Silesia, from Krakau to the Saxon frontier, to be beset with troops on the war footing, without making counter-preparations for the defence of the land.

'In the present crisis I have not omitted giving your Excellency these details, and earnestly request you to speak in this sense to the Government to which you have the honour of being accredited, that the preparations which we find ourselves compelled to take may be viewed in their proper light.

'But measures for our own immediate security are not all that the state of things imperatively requires of us. The experience we have once more made of the slight trust to be placed in an Austrian alliance, and of the true dispositions of the Vienna Cabinet towards us, compels us also to look to the future, and to cast about for guarantees, insuring to us that safety which we have vainly sought in alliance with the other German great Power, while we have actually found ourselves menaced by her. By her position, by her German character, and by the German spirit of her princes, Prussia has it in the

first place indicated to her that she should seek these guarantees in Germany itself.

'We hope, and at all events will first endeavour, to find security for national independence in the basis of German nationality, and in strengthening the ties which bind us to the other German States. The conviction, however, forces itself upon us, as often as we contemplate this object, that in its existing state the Confederation is ill adapted for such an end, and for the active policy which important crises may at each instant require. Its constitution was based on the supposition that the two German great Powers would always be at one. So long as Prussia upheld this state of things by continually giving way to Austria, it could subsist: serious antagonism between the two Powers it would not endure, a threatened breach and conflict it could neither obviate nor set aside. We have, indeed, had to gain the experience that, even when the two Powers were agreed, the institutions of the Diet did not suffice to allow Germany to participate in an active national and advantageous policy. Repeatedly also have we made known to our Confederates in the Diet our opinion that the military institutions of the Diet were ill framed for the security of Germany, and have vainly striven, within the limits of existing Confederate institutions, to improve them on new and suitable principles. We find it necessary, in the existing state of things, not

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to rely on efficient Confederate assistance should we be attacked. In case of any attack, either by Austria or other States, we must always find resources in the first place in our own strength, unless special good-will on the part of individual German Governments puts means in movement for our support, for, by the ordinary mode of proceeding of the Diet, such activity could only be arrived at much too late to be of any service to us.

'We find ourselves, then, in face of the threatening armaments of Austria, under the necessity of asking our confederates in the Diet whether, and to what extent, we can count on their good dispositions?

'But even when these good dispositions on the part of some of our allies exist, we derive thence no security against impending dangers, because in the actual condition of the Confederation, and the state of its military organisation, the possibility of giving proof thereof would legally and materially be seriously deficient.

'These considerations, and the abnormal situation into which Prussia is brought by the hostile attitude of the other great Power associated with her in the Confederation, compel us to bring under consideration a reform of the Diet bearing on its actual relations. The need thereof appears to us so much the more imperatively evident, that we cannot obtain a satisfactory solution of the question we

have just had to put, respecting the aid we might look for. At any rate we cannot abstain from thus acting, and are persuaded that we are not proceeding in our own interest alone. By geographical situation the interests of Prussia and of Germany are already identical, and on our side as well as that of Germany the advantages are reciprocal. If we are not sure of Germany, our position becomes at once more perilous than that of most other European States, by reason of our geographical position. The fate of Prussia, however, involves the fate of Germany, nor can we doubt that if the power of Prussia was once broken Germany would merely exist with a passive share in the policy of the nations of Europe. All German Governments ought to regard it as a sacred duty to prevent this, and ought to labour together with Prussia for that end. If the Germanic Confederation, with its existing conformation and its actual political and military arrangements, has to encounter great European crises, which may arise at any moment from more than one reason, it is seriously to be feared that she would be unequal to the task, and would be unable to defend Germany from the fate of Poland.

'We entreat the . . . . Government on its part to examine the situation seriously and searchingly, and reserve to ourselves the making further overtures in this direction within a brief delay.

'In the first instance, however, we have to request

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a reply to the query put—whether, and to what extent, we can count on their support in case we are attacked by Austria, or compelled to go to war by unequivocal threats.

'Your Excellency is begged to make this inquiry, and at the same time to submit the reflections contained in this despatch, which you are instructed to read through and communicate verbally, but officially, to the Government to which you are accredited.

'I expect your speedy report on the reception given to this overture.

(Signed) 'Von Bismarck.'

## CHAPTER XII.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF M. DE BISMARCK'S DESPATCH—HIS GROUNDS FOR SEEKING SPEEDY WAR—COMMENCEMENT OF OPEN PREPARATIONS—ARMING FORTRESSES, ETC.—AUSTRIAN CIRCULAR TO GERMAN COURTS—DIET REFERS BOTH STATES TO ART XI. OF FINAL ACT OF VIENNA—ARMAMENTS.

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THE gist of the Prussian premier's despatch may be given in few words: 'Prussia has irrevocably broken with Austria. The Imperial Government takes a menacing attitude. Prussia rather courts the issue and is ready to fight. Prussia expects that all Germany will side with her against Austria. The Confederation is antiquated and must be remodelled. Prussia must have control of the armed force of Germany.' It was certainly audacious to hold up to Germany the memory of partitioned Poland, but M. de Bismarck's audacity was controlled by his habitual prudence, and at this period, the end of March, General Govone was already at Berlin, and the conclusion of the alliance with Italy was as good as insured. His Excellency knew exactly the men with whom he had to deal. His information as to the military preparations of Austria was so exact, that while the few hesitating movements of troops

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made by that Government gave him a plea for the assertion that Prussia was *menaced*, he well knew that the Prussian organisation was so perfect that fourteen days sufficed for putting superior forces in readiness to act; and calculating on the division of the Austrian armies, which was a necessary consequence of their having at the same time to make head against Italy, there can be little doubt that the Prussian staff was already elaborating those admirable plans of an offensive advance into Bohemia which were subsequently carried out with such signal success, and scanning the future battle-field, with that confidence which the consciousness of handling a superior numerical force always inspires in strategy.

The Prussian orders for mobilising and putting on the war establishment followed closely on the circular given in the preceding chapter. Decrees
March 28. of March 28 and 29 ordered large reinforcements to join their respective corps; the artillery especially was extensively placed on the war footing, and the Silesian and Elbe fortresses were armed.

The Austrian Cabinet could not long remain in ignorance of M. de Bismarck's confidential circular of March 24. In all likelihood this was calculated upon by his Excellency, and the language of that despatch only formed one more link in that chain of provocations by which it was his policy to weary out the forbearance of the Imperial Government. As soon, then, as the Austrian Cabinet became acquainted

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with the Prussian circular of March 24, Count Karolyi received orders from his Government to address the following note to the Prussian Government, which bears date March 31 :—

'It has come to the knowledge of the Imperial Government that, in order to divert from itself the responsibility attaching to the existing apprehensions of peace being endangered, the Prussian Government imputes hostile intentions to the Imperial Court, and has even gone so far as to hint at the possibility of the Prussian monarchy being imperilled by Austria's assuming the offensive. March 31.

'Although the groundlessness of such a suggestion is notorious throughout Europe, the Imperial Government deems it of importance expressly to protest to the Royal Government against an imputation so utterly irreconcilable with the evidence of facts.

'The undersigned has therefore been instructed to declare in the most formal manner to M. de Bismarck that nothing is further from the intentions of his Majesty the Emperor than any offensive attack on Prussia.

'Not only is any such intent absolutely precluded by the often-proved friendly dispositions of His Majesty the Emperor for the person of His Majesty the King and the Prussian State by word and deed, but the Emperor is mindful of the engagements openly contracted by Austria as well as by Prussia in the bond of the Germanic Confederation.

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'His Majesty the Emperor is for his part firmly resolved not to put himself in opposition to the provisions of Article XI. of the Act of Confederation which inhibits the members of the Confederation from prosecuting their differences by force.

'The undersigned has the honour of requesting the Minister President to lay this note before the King, his august master, and to add the expression of his hope that the Royal Cabinet will feel itself disposed to refute all suspicion of contemplated breach of peace not less decidedly and unequivocally than the undersigned has done in the name of his own most exalted Government; so that thereby the general reliance on the internal tranquillity of Germany, which ought never to have been disturbed, may be re-established.'

April 6. An answer was made to this note by the hands of Baron v. Werther, Prussian envoy at Vienna, on April 6, in which his Excellency said that the fears of disturbance of peace had been caused by the Austrian military preparations which, he alleged, were commenced on March 13, and which were so extensive and had taken such directions as could by no means be explained away by saying that they were directed against disturbances in Bohemia.

If Austria really imagined that she was threatened by Prussia, it might be conceivable according to the declarations put forward that the Imperial Government had given an intimation to the Diet conform-

ably with Article XI.* The secrecy observed, however, and the endeavour to represent the military preparations as of insignificant proportions had forced the Prussian Government to take steps on March 28 for the defence of the country. If the Imperial Government had no intention of attacking Prussia, the Royal Government found it difficult to understand why Austria objected to those measures. Nothing was further from the views of the King than an offensive war.

It will be remembered that this declaration bore date April 6, and that on the 8th the treaty of offensive and defensive alliance was signed at

* Art. XI. of the Diet's constitution has been, and will again be, so frequently referred to that it seems advisable to give its text:—

'All members of the Confederation engage to defend Germany, and in like manner each individual Confederate State against every attack, and guarantee to each other mutually all their possessions comprised in the Confederation. In case of war declared by the Confederation no member can enter on individual negotiations or conclude a truce or peace individually. The members of the Diet retain the right of contracting any alliance, but bind themselves not to make any engagement directed against the safety of the Confederation or of any of its members. The members of the Confederation promise not to make war on each other on any pretext whatsoever, or to pursue their differences by force, but to lay them before the Diet. It then becomes the duty of the Diet to endeavour to promote an accord by a committee, and in case such attempt should fail, and a judicial decision become necessary, to bring this about by a properly instituted Austrägal Tribunal, to whose sentence the contending parties are bound instantly to submit.'

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Berlin by M. de Bismarck and the Italian plenipotentiary.

The Austrian Government was perfectly well informed of all these proceedings, and even at the time or not long afterwards had knowledge of an instruction addressed by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, General La Marmora, to Count Barral, their envoy at Berlin, dated March 9, recommending General Govone as possessing his sovereign's entire confidence; and that his mission to Prussia was with the object of coming to agreement on military measures for the mutual defence of the two States. As has been said, the treaty was signed on April 8. Every step which led to the impending warfare is of such great interest that the reader will not complain if the recital of events is momentarily interrupted to give a summary of General La Marmora's despatch of April 3, accrediting General Govone to the Prussian Government, with instructions to treat for these objects :—

1. For upholding by force of arms the propositions made by his Prussian Majesty for reforming the constitution of the Diet in conformity with the wants of the nation.

2. To bring about the cession of Italian territory now subjected to Austria to the kingdom of Italy.

'Piedmont,' says this despatch, 'began in 1859 the task of freeing Italy, with the noble aid of France.

'We desire that within no distant period this task

may be accomplished, and that perhaps by a war of independence fought side by side with that nation which represents the future of the German people in the name and on the principle of an identical nationality. Amongst the solutions of the Venetian question which have recently been put forward; this will enable us better than any other to uphold the logic of our political and international position, and to maintain even the most remote of our natural alliances.

'It would moreover be most gratifying to us to give support to Prussia against the machinations of the Austrian Empire since the kingdom places itself decidedly at the head of the German national party, and summons that parliament which for long years has been the object of the nation's desire, and will secure the progress of liberal institutions for Germany as well as for Italy by the exclusion of Austria.'

The treaty of April 8 was in many of its stipulations less binding on Prussia than on Italy. Thus Prussia reserved to herself the right of declaring war within three months, in which case Italy bound herself to attack Austria. If, however, Austria attacked Italy, Prussia did not promise simultaneous action in Germany, or to assist Italy on her own territory. The stipulation not to make a separate peace if war was once declared was mutual, as was also that which bound both sides to continue the war till Italy had gained Venetia, and Prussia secured

April 8.

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a corresponding augmentation of territory in Germany.*

For some time after the conclusion of this treaty M. de Bismarck kept up the comedy of accusing Austria of menacing preparations. His assurances that nothing was further from the intentions of his royal master than an offensive war had at the same time a basis of truth in the known dispositions of his Prussian Majesty; but the minister was labouring night and day to produce that change in the King's sentiments which he in the end succeeded in effecting, and in nothing that he undertook perhaps did this remarkable man encounter greater difficulties or show more consummate ability than in bringing King Frederick William to break with tradition, to espouse the animosities, to see in fine with the eyes of his Minister President.

So early as February 28 a Cabinet Council had sat at Berlin to weigh the probabilities of war. The Governor of Schleswig and the Chief of the General Staff had been summoned to give their advice.

It was decided in that sitting not to make any extraordinary preparations, for such reliance, it was found, could be placed on the efficiency of the army

* This first became known from Jacini's publication in 1868, in defence of La Marmora.—*Due Anni di Politica Italiana.*

Did the Article point to conquest from Austria, or to the annexations since made by Prussia of Hanover and its neighbour States? At all events it gives a key to the Prussian motives for war.

organisation newly introduced, and well-nigh perfected, that no apprehensions need be felt that Prussia could be taken unawares.

On March 10, a similar military council took place at Vienna, to which Marshal Benedek was called, and certain measures for changes of quarters of regiments and other active steps were taken which, though really to be looked on as precautionary, were of a hesitating and incomplete nature, but furnished so watchful an adversary as M. de Bismarck with those grounds of complaint which he turned to such good account.

It must not be forgotten that the Austrian division serving in Holstein was so far removed from any basis of support, and so greatly outnumbered by the Prussian forces in Schleswig, that they might almost be regarded as a forlorn hope in case of hostilities breaking out suddenly, and it will be seen eventually that they were only saved from disaster with difficulty and by a well-managed retreat from their exposed position.

At the end of March, Prussian official sources state that the Austrian force in Bohemia and near the Silesian frontier consisted of seventy-one battalions, forty-four squadrons, and thirty-three batteries of artillery; and that within a brief lapse of time, by calling in the infantry reserves, an army of 80,000 men, with 240 guns equipped for service, might have been brought together.

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The Prussian force quartered in Silesia at this period is stated by the same authority to have amounted to about 25,000 men, with 18 batteries of artillery: the cavalry and artillery being on the ordinary peace establishment, and the infantry in their customary quarters—furlough men and reserves not called up.

Now was tested the admirable efficiency of the new army organisation of the kingdom of Prussia, which, as has already been observed, was begun in 1859, and which, despite the opposition of the Chambers, and no inconsiderable degree of public discontent, had been so far perfected that, whether M. de Bismarck had or had not grounds for imputing to Austria priority in taking warlike measures, Prussia was speedily enabled to put on a war footing considerably larger forces than Austria could possibly oppose to them.

From March 29 to 31, orders were issued for the 3rd, 4th, and 6th regiments of artillery, and the artillery of the guard, the first battalion of the 5th artillery regiment, and the horse artillery division to call up their furlough men, so as to bring the battalions to the war establishment, and to form their reserve detachments. The horses required were to be bought at once. The corps quartered on the frontier, consisting of five divisions, as well as the four new regiments of the guard, and the 72nd

regiment in garrison at Torgau, were to bring their strength up to 686 men per battalion.

The fortresses of Cosel, Reisse, Glaz, Torgau, and Wittenberg were armed, garrisoned, and provisioned on the full war footing. The three first-named fortresses also received their mounted batteries for sorties. Glogau, Spandau, and Magdeburg obtained the first instalment of their established augmentation of men.

At the same time the 6th army corps, serving in Silesia, was similarly augmented and placed on the war establishment.

On March 25, the Italian minister of war issued an order augmenting the national force by more than 100,000 men.

## CHAPTER XIII.

EXCHANGE OF NOTES BETWEEN PRUSSIA AND AUSTRIA—PRUSSIAN SCHEME OF DIETAL REFORM—MUTUAL RECRIMINATIONS OF THE TWO GREAT POWERS.

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WHILST these warlike preparations were taking their course, diplomacy was actively engaged in cloaking the real intent of the Prussian Government. Neither did M. de Bismarck neglect any method that his own thorough knowledge of German affairs suggested, or that persuasion or fear could work out, to secure allies to Prussia or to detach the natural German adherents of Austria from her side in the impending contest.

The treaty with Italy was signed, as has been seen, at Berlin on March 8. On the 6th, a Prussian note of reassuring character had reached the Cabinet of Vienna, and Count Mensdorff lost no time in replying to it on the following day, March 7, in conciliatory language, assuring the Prussian Government that no preparations had been made sufficient to justify the suspicion that Austria was preparing for a great war. The Emperor, in order to remove any such suspicion, had himself given directions to make known to the Prussian envoy every actual

movement of troops. All discussion as to which State had taken the initiative in arming must for the future be superfluous, as the Emperor had declared that he had never contemplated an attack on Prussia. The Cabinet of Vienna had but wished to receive a similar declaration on King William's part, and as His Majesty had given that assurance, and as Austria had really made no warlike preparations, it only remained for Prussia to countermand those which, as she acknowledged, had been made since March 28.

The respective dates of these transactions will be borne in mind, and the reader will not be surprised to find that Count Mensdorff's note was speedily replied to in a tone that showed anything but peaceable dispositions on the side of Prussia. It is necessary, however, to give some account of what M. de Bismarck was simultaneously doing at Frankfort.

On April 9, the Prussian envoy laid the following proposition before the Diet:—

'The Diet will within a period to be precisely fixed decree the convocation of a national Assembly to be elected by universal and direct suffrage, for the purpose of receiving and deliberating on the proposals of the German Governments for the reform of the Confederation. The Government, however, must meanwhile, and until the said Assembly comes

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together, determine on these proposals by mutual understanding.'

This proposition was prefaced by a long programme setting forth how the recent attempts at reform had proved that neither the one-sided negotiations of the Governments nor the discussions of an elective body were capable by themselves of creating a renovated national constitution, and that consequently the participation of both factors appeared necessary for that end.

Somewhat anticipating other events, it may here be stated that this proposition, which excited intense surprise and agitation throughout Germany, though the sincerity of the scheme was much questioned, was by a Dietal vote taken on April 21 referred to a committee of nine members. In the same sitting a majority of the Diet decided that the Prussian Government should be asked to give the Diet full explanations as to the objects and extent of the proposed reforms.

M. de Bismarck gave a sharp reply to this interrogation. By a circular to the several German Governments, dated April 27, he said that 'the determination of the period of the opening of the Parliament was to be regarded as the essence of the proposition, and that he could put no reliance on the Governments coming to an agreement as to the text and terms of their proposals, unless that pre-

liminary determination was taken as a self-imposed necessity.

'If this question was put aside, all serious consideration of Dietal reform became impossible; he would however indicate in the deliberations of the Committee, to what regions of political life the Prussian proposals would extend.'

The Austrian note, of April 7, to the Berlin Cabinet, was replied to by M. de Bismarck on April 15, to this effect: that while Austria, because the Emperor had given his word that no aggression was intended, considered it unnecessary to withdraw the military dispositions already taken, she demanded from Prussia to countermand measures of precaution only taken after strong provocation and when the King had pledged his word in the same manner as the Emperor of Austria. Those measures could not be desisted from till their cause was removed. The Imperial Government must take the initiative of arresting its avowed armaments if a like step was expected from Prussia.

On April 18 Count Karolyi was instructed to make this overture at Berlin: 'His Imperial Majesty the Emperor was prepared to issue orders on the 25th of the month, to countermand the dislocation of troops which the Royal Government regarded as preparations for war menacing to Prussia, as well as to arrest all steps connected therewith, in case his Imperial Majesty obtained from the Court of Berlin

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a distinct consent to the issue of a royal order, on that, or the following day, re-establishing the former regular peace establishment of those portions of the army which had assumed the augmented establishment since the 27th of the preceding month.

The Prussian Government accepted this proposal on April 21, saying that it did so with satisfaction, and would execute it in like manner and time as the corresponding diminution of the war effective of the Austrian army was actually carried out. The Royal Government requested further information as to proportion and term of the reductions.

Events meanwhile were outrunning these futile attempts to stave off the rupture, for which Prussia, at least, was now all but fully prepared.

Secure, or nearly so, of Prussian co-operation, the Italian Government was pushing its warlike preparations vigorously, and popular feeling was so strong that it is doubtful whether, even without the certitude of Prussian aid, the administration of the new kingdom would have found itself able to restrain the warlike ardour of its population, and would not have found itself forced into the conflict.

This state of things on the Italian frontier could not escape the vigilance of the Austrian Government, and on April 26, before any actual steps for disarmament had been taken, Count Mensdorff found himself under the necessity of addressing two notes to the Prussian Cabinet. One related to the state of things

in Italy—the other to the Schleswig-Holstein question. The first was to the following purport:—

That his Imperial Majesty the Emperor accepted with the deepest satisfaction the covenanted disarmament, and was prepared to execute what was required without delay; that is to say, to withdraw the troops intended for strengthening the Bohemian garrisons. At the same time, to avoid all misinterpretation, it was necessary to inform the Royal Government that Austria found herself compelled to put her army of Italy on the war-footing, both for defence of the Po frontier, as well as in order to take comprehensive measures for defence of her menaced sea-coasts.

These precautions had solely in view the contingency of a war against the Italians, and the Imperial Government would forthwith commence disarming, as soon as they were assured that these measures in the south would have no influence on the re-establishment of the normal effective agreed upon between the two states.

To this despatch the answer of the Prussian Cabinet, dated April 30, was to this effect: That they were grievously disappointed, having expected that the re-establishment of the normal *status quo* would have extended to all movements of troops conducing to the war effective state. The Imperial Government however, now alluded merely to the movements of troops in Bohemia, passing unnoticed those which had taken place in Moravia and West Galicia.

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Neither could the Prussian Government recognise the motives alleged for arming in Italy, for all sources of information agreed in stating that no warlike preparations had taken place in the kingdom of Italy.

If indeed, quite recently, any steps of the kind had been taken, they could have had no other cause than the Austrian armaments.

The Prussian Government could not but express the hope that Austria would not only withdraw all preparations in the northern provinces, but being speedily convinced of the groundlessness of any motives for arming in the south, would consequently proceed to restore the peace establishment of the entire Imperial army. On these conditions alone, or otherwise only by maintenance of parity in the war effective of both states, could the Royal Government consent to enter on negotiations.

The correspondence of the two Governments was evidently fast approaching that stage when the blow follows the word. The irony of the Prussian premier could hardly be more temperately replied to than in the following note of Count Karolyi dated May 4, addressed to M. de Bismarck:—

'Your Excellency cannot fail to perceive that, in consideration of such a declaration, the negotiation for simultaneous withdrawal of military preparations by Prussia against Austria, and of Austria against Prussia, must be considered by us as exhausted.

'By the public assurances given by us in Berlin, as well as in Frankfort, it is well established that Prussia has no aggression to apprehend from us, or Germany to fear any breach of the peace of the Confederation.

'Just as little does Austria contemplate an attack on Italy, albeit the wresting from the Austrian dominion of a portion of her States has constantly been the programme of the Florentine Government.

'On the other hand, we have the duty of providing for the defence of the Empire; and if Prussia sees in our defensive measures against Italy a motive for maintaining her own war effective state, we can but admit the obligation, which is subject to no foreign control, without allowing ourselves further to discuss the priority or extent of separate military precautions.

'It cannot, however, be ignored in Berlin, that we have to secure not only the integrity of our own Empire, but the territory of the Germanic Confederation against Italian aggression; and we must venture in the interest of Germany, seriously to inquire how Prussia can reconcile with the duties of a German Power the demand that we should leave the German frontier undefended.'

In a previous part of this chapter mention was made of a simultaneous note having been handed to the Prussian Government concerning the Schleswig-Holstein question. It may be doubted whether the

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first of these documents was not absolutely welcome to M. de Bismarck, as bringing matters a step nearer to that breach which he had long resolved to provoke. The second would naturally be first weighed in the same spirit, but it was more dangerous, as appealing at once to the still existing ties and authority of Federal union, and to the warm partisanship for the succession of the Prince of Augustenburg to the sovereignty of the Duchies which was felt throughout Germany, and which was by no means extinct.

This tendency of public opinion M. de Bismarck had determined on combating from the first. The events which his policy was preparing in Germany itself, must necessarily, if successful, make his Government master of any new constitutional organisation that would result from the destruction of the existing order of things. It was unlikely, therefore, that he should see without extreme displeasure any effort at exercising Federal authority directed towards an object like that of the Augustenburg succession, wholly incompatible as it was with that scheme of appropriation of the Duchies by Prussia, which the Prussian minister had never lost sight of since their acquisition first became an object of his ambition. It will presently be seen in what temper his Excellency replied to Count Mensdorff's proposal of April 26, which was to this effect: That in order to bring back the matters in discus-

sion between the two Governments to their original basis, Count Mensdorff invited the Prussian Government to make in the Diet a common declaration with Austria, that they would cede the rights acquired by them by the Treaty of Vienna to that claimant of the sovereignty of the Duchies whom the Diet recognised as having predominant right to the succession.

The Austrian Government would insure to Prussia all those special advantages provisionally given to her in Holstein by the Treaty of Gastein, so that Prussia would obtain the military positions of Kiel, Rendsburg, and Sonderburg. Kiel should become a Federal port, and Rendsburg a Federal fortress, &c.

Austria would also support all reasonable demands of Prussia, not only on these points, but for obtaining cession of the territory requisite for the fortification of Düppel and Alsen, from the future sovereign. Other peculiar advantages for Prussia were also held in perspective, regarding the passage through Holstein, accession of the Duchies to the Zollverein, and the projected ship-canal between the Baltic and North Seas.

M. de Bismarck's reply was dated on May 7, and he therein professed in the strongest terms Prussia's intentions of adhering faithfully to the Treaty of Vienna, and the Gastein Convention.

By those acts, however, his Excellency maintained, any intervention by a third party, and consequently

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that of the Diet, was precluded. Prussia, it was further said, had no inclination to renounce her rights to Schleswig-Holstein in favour of any third party, but was always ready to treat with Austria, as to the conditions on which she would be disposed to cede her share of the rights accruing to her by the Treaty of Vienna.

This reply, which apparently brought the question back to the original starting-point of the discussion, proved in reality that matters were come to a deadlock, and that in fact no agreement was possible.

## CHAPTER XIV.

ARMING OF SAXONY—PRUSSIAN OVERTURES TO MIDDLE STATES—GENERAL ARMAMENTS—PROCEEDINGS IN DIET, ETC.



THE circular note of M. de Bismarck to the several German Governments of April 27, consequent on the proceedings of the Diet on the 21st of the month, of which a summary was given in the beginning of the last chapter, was quickly followed by a Prussian declaration, dated also on April 27, addressed to the Saxon Government. This declaration was in a tone of menace, as it stated that the military position of that State did not permit Prussia to see it arming with indifference, the more so as there were grounds for believing that Saxony was arming against Prussia. In case, therefore, no satisfactory explanations were afforded, the Prussian Government would be compelled to order corresponding military dispositions.

The Saxon Minister, Freiherr v. Beust, replied to this note on April 29, evading any direct avowal of partisanship, appealing to the principles of Federal law, and the 11th article of the Constitutional Act; and adding, that in the case of a member appealing to the Diet under menace of attack, it was the

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constitutional right of such confederate to appear armed, and not defenceless.

Overtures in connexion with the Prussian scheme of reform for the Confederation, as well as in view of the impending rupture, were about this time also made to others of the middle States, especially to Bavaria and Hanover, with the view either of gaining their assistance, or securing their neutrality. To Bavaria, especially, the prospect of the military leadership of the south was unavailingly held out as a lure. Hanover was alternately threatened and cajoled, and it is certain that Count Platen did aim at making engagements for his Government's remaining neutral. When eventually the fortune of war was adverse, the dominions of the House of Guelph were far too tempting a prize for Prussia not to seize the occasion, and by annexing the Hanoverian kingdom Prussia treated as a vanquished foe the confederate whom calculated harshness had compelled to adhere to the prescriptons of Federal law with too fatal fidelity.*

At the beginning of May, then, the situation was much as follows: The Austrian Government had

* When on June 15 Count Platen answered *verbally* the summons of the Prussian minister, Prince Ysenburg, 'that Hanover could not join Prussia,' the Prince replied, '*then I declare War.*' Some hours later, when Count Platen sent him a note in which a peaceable solution was sought, Prince Ysenburg declined to receive it, on the plea that he had ceased to bear a public character!

not ceased its movements of troops, and, convinced at length of the seriousness of the crisis, began earnestly to prepare to meet it. The fortresses of Theresienstadt and Josephstadt were armed, the fortifications of Cracow strengthened, and the restoration of the dilapidated place of arms, Königgratz, was vigorously pressed. The regiments in Bohemia, Moravia, and West Galicia were raised to their full war complement, several of them receiving their fourth battalion; the transport corps was horsed, and the reserves formed. Two regiments of Hussars from Galicia, and three of Uhlans from Hungary, entered Bohemia and Moravia. The ammunition cars of the artillery were horsed. Concentration of troops took place at Pesth, Vienna, and Laybach, and the Grenzer or frontier battalions formed a reserve of forty battalions ready to take the field. All men on furlough were summoned to the ranks, so that the Austrian force in readiness to take the field had apparently some advantage in priority of concentration.

The Prussian orders for mobilisation were issued between the 3rd and 12th of May. In the first instance they embraced only the 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th army corps, and the guard, with a portion of the Landwehr of the 5th and 6th district, to form battalions for garrison duty, but the entire cavalry and artillery were at once brought to their full war establishment, as was the case with the light infantry (Jäger) and pioneer battalions.

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The normal strength of a Prussian army corps on the war establishment is 25,798 infantry, 3,812 cavalry, and 108 guns, or somewhat more than 30,000 combatants. The troops first organised, then, reckoning the Guard at 40,000 men, would not exceed 170,000 men, with 540 guns—a powerful force under any circumstances; but Prussia, finding it necessary to put forth greater strength, brought it up to more than 440,000 men, and 840 guns, before hostilities actually began, or by speedy reinforcements shortly after war had commenced. Standing army and Landwehr together, the actual available forces of Prussia amount to 599,351 combatants, 61,634 non-combatants, 110,309 administration, with 16,191 officers, 126,500 horses, 1,008 guns, and 7,992 field equipages.

Besides these forces organised for service in the field, Prussia had an army of reserve of 126,339 men, with 144 guns, and her garrison troops numbered 163,602; but nine regiments of the regular troops, or Landwehr, *i.e.* 27 battalions, were specially detailed for garrison duties, and are therefore to be deducted from the numbers of the effective field force. The total strength of the army was somewhat above 666,000 men.

An Austrian army corps on the war footing counted about 28,000 combatants with from 70 to 80 guns. The Imperial Government's order of battle of the army of the north at the period of the

breaking-out of hostilities, consisted of the 1st, the 2nd, the 4th, the 6th, the 8th, and 10th army corps, with suitable reserves; 203 battalions of infantry, 62 companies of pioneers and pontoneers, 155 squadrons of cavalry and 93 batteries of 4-pounders and 8-pounders, 8 guns per battery, and 3 rocket batteries. The total force, then, would amount to somewhat more than 215,000 men, of which it will be remembered that a small portion, some 5,000 men, was still in Holstein, while about 33,000 more men were in garrison.

The movable force of Austria in Italy at the same period consisted of 97 battalions of infantry, 55 companies of pioneers and pontoneers, 28 squadrons of cavalry, and 33 batteries, while 42 battalions of infantry and 42 companies of pioneers, with 3 squadrons of cavalry and 3 batteries of artillery, were on garrison duty in that country.

The nominal force of the Italian war establishment was 334,963 men, 39,148 horses, and 480 guns. Italy, therefore, with her army numbering more than 300,000, with 480 guns, formed a powerful diversion in favour of Prussia, for while, as is here seen, Austria had to make head against the Italian attack by a force of more than 150,000 men with 288 guns, Prussia found herself with a force of barely 60,000 men and 121 guns, fully able to cope with the German forces which acted against her in Western Germany. In the course of operations, indeed,

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the Prussian forces were reinforced by about 6,000 men and 28 guns, including two 6-pounder batteries surrendered by the Hanoverians after the battle of Langensalza. It is clear, therefore, that Prussia was in a condition, of which her military commanders ably availed themselves, to direct nearly the whole available force of the kingdom offensively against Austria. The ill-concerted measures and feeble operations of the Confederate troops adhering to the Diet, and Prussia's thorough acquaintance with their imperfect state of preparation, left her but trifling disquietude.

These military details would be incomplete without some particulars of the force called out by the Diet to support Confederate rights, and under sanction of Federal law, which was placed under the orders of Prince Alexander of Hesse, and was at first concentrated in and around Frankfort. With some immaterial exceptions, such as the addition of the Nassau troops, this force was in fact the 8th corps of the military contingent of the expiring Germanic Confederation.

This corps was composed of the troops of Würtemberg, Electoral and Grand-Ducal Hesse, Baden, and Nassau, with an Austrian division commanded by Count Neipperg, not quite 9,000 strong; the whole force numbering somewhat more than 54,000 infantry and cavalry, with 136 guns.

Bavaria espoused the same cause, and put on foot

some 40,000 men, while the Hanoverians assisted in the war with a force counting about 20,000 of all arms, with 54 guns. Thus in Germany, Prussia entered on the war with 600,000 men, while Austria and her allies had some 360,000 men in Germany, and 150,000 in Italy. Italy had on foot nearly 300,000 combatants, so that the contest was begun with the mighty host of 1,410,000.

After this brief recapitulation of the forces which were so shortly to be engaged in conflict, it is necessary to revert to the proceedings which immediately preceded and ushered in the outbreak of hostilities.

On May 5, Saxony laid the documents relating to her controversy with Prussia before the Diet, claiming the intervention of the Confederation on the basis of Art. XI. of the Constitutional Act, and asserting the right, meanwhile, of taking all necessary steps for self-defence.

M. de Savigny replied to the Saxon communication on behalf of the Prussian Government, that preceding events in the Diet, and the fruitless issue of Prussia's direct negotiations with Austria and Saxony, disinclined them from arresting any of the precautionary measures the Government had already taken. Rather it was their right to expect that the Diet would move Austria and Saxony to put a stop to their armaments. He added that if the Diet remained passive, or felt itself unable to act in this sense, Prussia would find herself compelled

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to have regard only to her own security and the necessity of upholding her European position, and would subordinate her relations to the Confederation to the imperative claims of self-preservation.

Soon after this came the last effort made for the preservation of peace by the middle German States in the Conference of Bamberg, in which the representatives of Bavaria, Würtemberg, Baden, and Grand-Ducal Hesse, took part with those of the Saxon Grand-Ducal and Ducal Houses, Brunswick, and Nassau. These on May 19 conjointly made the following motion in the Diet:—

May 19.

'The Diet will request those members of the Confederation which have taken any steps for military preparations or movements beyond their peace establishments, to declare in the next sitting of the Diet, whether, and on what conditions, they will be prepared simultaneously to reduce their armed force to the peace establishment, and on a day to be agreed upon in the Diet's sitting.'

The vote on this proposition was to be taken on June 1. In this memorable sitting of the Assembly, Baron Kübeck, on behalf of Austria, declared that the Imperial Government could look back tranquilly on their own patient endeavours, in spite of little recognition, constantly to maintain a good understanding with Prussia. Prussia, however, had dealt with the final solution of negotiations as a question of force, and had not shrunk from the lamentable

June 1.

decision of allying herself with a foreign opponent of the Empire. Austria, therefore, imperilled on two sides, and uncertain whether the first attack would take place in the south or in the north, must necessarily put herself in an attitude of defence.

His Excellency went on to say that, referring to the joint declaration of Austria and Prussia of August 24, 1865, the Imperial Government must proclaim that they were compelled for the present to regard as frustrated their efforts at coming to any understanding with Prussia, for a definitive settlement of the question of the Duchies, on Federal principles; that, in this affair of common German interest, they left all future decisions to the Diet, assuring that body of Austria's most ready concurrence; and, further, that the Imperial Governor in Holstein had, at the same time, received the requisite full powers for convoking the Holstein States Assembly, in order that this legally constituted representative body might no longer want opportunity for expressing their views, a right assured to them by the 1st Article of the Convention of Gastein.

The Prussian envoy, Baron de Savigny, commenced his remarks on the motion before the Diet by a repetition of the charge against Austria of having taken the lead in arming. He said, however, that the Prussian Government was still ready to revert to the peace establishment, if the Diet would enjoin Austria and Saxony to countermand

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their preparations, which were menacing to peace, and if the Royal Government could be guaranteed against future similar infractions of the Federal peace. If the Diet found itself incompetent to this task, or if it opposed the introduction of such a reform as was calculated to obviate the recurrence of such situations, Prussia would found her future decisions solely on her own appreciations of right.

In the proceedings of Austria, both as regarded her appeal to the Diet, and in convoking the States of Holstein, Prussia saw a violation of the Convention of Gastein.

M. de Bismarck sent a protest, conceived in similar terms, on June 3, to Vienna, declaring that Prussia now considered herself justified in reverting to the basis of the Treaty of Vienna, and the Government had consequently placed the defence of its condominate right in the hands of General v. Manteuffel.

At the same time his Excellency addressed a circular to the Prussian representatives at all foreign Courts, holding up the proceedings of Austria in the light of direct provocations, with the manifest intention of bringing matters to a decision by force of arms. This circular was couched in terms of the bitterest invective, and sufficiently indicated that all prospect of accommodation was abandoned.

## CHAPTER XV.

WITHDRAWAL OF AUSTRIAN AND PRUSSIAN TROOPS FROM FEDERAL GARRISONS—CONVOCATION OF HOLSTEIN STATES—ENTRANCE OF PRUSSIAN TROOPS INTO HOLSTEIN—RETREAT OF AUSTRIANS—RUPTURE OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS—THE FIFTEENTH OF JUNE IN THE DIET—PRUSSIA SUMMONS SAXONY, HANOVER, AND CASSEL TO REMAIN NEUTRAL—DECLARATIONS OF WAR.



No ONE could longer doubt that the outbreak of hostilities was imminent. Those indeed who were on the spot saw reason for apprehending that where the troops of Austria and Prussia were in immediate contact, as was the case in those towns where they held garrisons in common, some unforeseen circumstance might any day lead to deadly conflict; for it was no longer possible that officers or men of either army should remain in ignorance of the unfriendly relations which had sprung up between their respective countries. The safest mode of avoiding such a catastrophe was taken by the Diet's adopting a proposition, provoked as was generally known by Prussia, but introduced by Baron v. der Pfordten, the Bavarian envoy, on June 2, for the withdrawal of both the Austrian and Prussian garrisons from Rastadt, Mayence, and Frankfort.

Partial military quarrels had indeed already

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taken place, in Rendsburg and in Kiel, between the troops of the two States, when the order issued by Lieutenant-Field-Marshal v. Gablenz on June 5, convoking the assembly of the Holstein representative body, brought matters to a crisis.

General v. Manteuffel was not backward in accepting the challenge. On the following day, June 6, the General intimated to the Austrian commander, that he looked on the order of convocation of the States as an encroachment on the rights of the King of Prussia, and summoned his Excellency to revoke it. At the same time, General v. Manteuffel gave him to understand that, exercising the condominate right, again accruing to Prussia, he must establish garrisons in certain unoccupied points of Holstein, for which purpose he should on the morrow enter the Duchy. The General requested that the local authorities might be warned, for the purpose of avoiding conflicts, and asseverated that his movement had solely a defensive character.

The Lieutenant-Field-Marshal was by no means in a position to resist an offensive move of the Prussians. His duty was evidently to avoid a conflict, and to bring away the small force under his orders, if still possible, without risking collision with an opponent disposing of three times the strength of the single Austrian brigade.

Orders had also reached the Lieutenant-Field-Marshal from Vienna that, in case the Prussians made

hostile demonstrations, he was to concentrate the force at Altona, and retreat across the Elbe.

The reply, therefore, which he made to General v. Manteuffel, though declining to recall his order, as being issued under the instructions of his Government, gave no indication of an intention to repel force by force. He protested against the announced occupation of the Duchy as a violation of the Convention of Gastein, and intimated that the seat of government would be transferred to Altona.

On June 7 the Austrian troops in Rendsburg quitted that fortress. On the 8th and 9th, General v. Manteuffel passed the Eider, and marched on Izehoe, which town was entered on the following day. The Austrian Government was declared at an end, and Baron v. Scheel-Plessen was installed as Over-President for the administration of both Duchies. June 7.

On June 10, the members of the Holstein States-General, who had been convoked by the Austrian Government, began to assemble in Izehoe. General v. Manteuffel's orders to prevent their holding a sitting were positive, and the mode he adopted was to compel the Commissary of the Austrian Government, who was to have opened the Assembly on the 11th, to leave Izehoe on the night of the 10th, and betake himself to Rendsburg. The major part of the representatives, finding how matters stood, left Izehoe on the 11th, and tranquillity was fully preserved.

The Austrians meanwhile were concentrated in

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and about Altona, on which town, perfectly without defences, General v. Manteuffel was advancing from the north with more than 12,000 men. Another Prussian force of Landwehr, with two squadrons of dragoons and artillery, was marching on the same point from Lauenburg, while in front of the town, the Prussian iron-clad 'Arminius' lay in the Elbe, with several gunboats.

Resistance by less than 5,000 men to so superior a force was clearly impossible, and having withdrawn his outposts during the day and evening of the

June 11.

11th within the town, Lieutenant-Field-Marshal v. Gablenz skilfully moved his entire force on that night from Altona, across the Elbe, to Harburg, whence, within the next few days, they were transported by railroad to South Germany. The major portion of this brigade under General v. Kalik, was removed to Bohemia, while the garrison of Mayence formed part of the division under command of Count Neipperg, which was subsequently attached to the 8th army corps.*

As the orders of General v. Manteuffel were to oppose the Austrians passing the Elbe, and to force the entrance into Altona if the Austrian troops defended it, the escape of this small force from annihilation or captivity must be regarded as having been effected with considerable skill.

* These troops also were, in the first place, transported to Bohemia, and then brought back again.

Whilst these operations were in progress in Holstein, the King of Prussia made a personal effort to come to an understanding with Austria, respecting which some degree of mystery still exists.

It is, however, certain that His Majesty sent a brother of Lieutenant-Field-Marshal v. Gablenz to Vienna, to propose the cession of Holstein for a pecuniary indemnity, and a division of Germany into North and South, under the respective presidial direction of the two great Powers. Whatever was the nature of this overture, it was summarily rejected, the chief ground urged by Austria being that she declined to violate the Federal law of Germany; and to the credit of the Imperial Government, it should be observed that this principle was observed throughout as an inviolable rule.

Prussia also entered a protest in the Diet's sitting of June 9 against any intervention of the Diet in Holstein matters. She would admit even now, said M. de Savigny, her envoy at Frankfort, a solution in conformity with the national wishes, but only in connexion with a reform of the Diet, so that she might be insured against the sacrifices she had made being profitable to dynastic interests only, instead of to the country at large (*Vaterland*). Under present circumstances Prussia would abate no iota of her right.

In the same sitting Austria again expressed her

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formal intention of adhering to the Treaty of Gastein, until the Diet had given its decision on the Schleswig-Holstein question.

Events, it will be seen, were already outrunning the leisurely proceedings of the Diet, and so far justifying Prussia in insisting on the reform of that body. At the same time, the line of conduct adopted by M. de Bismarck was in direct contempt of all Dietal forms, illustrating a comparison by which, as is well known, he had likened the Diet itself to a spider's web, which, as he said, held small flies fast, but was torn to shreds by a bee or a wasp. Even so the Prussian statesman, unable to fashion this institution exactly to his mind, roughly swept the whole fabric away!

On June 9 also, Count Mensdorff addressed a note to the Berlin Cabinet, in answer to M. de Bismarck's note of June 3, which was to the following purport:—

'1. That the rights of the Germanic Confederation neither ought to be nor could be infringed by any agreement made between Austria and Prussia; neither could any member of the Confederation, which declared its willingness to recognise the constitutional decisions of the Diet, trench thereby on the right of any other Confederate.

'2. The Royal Prussian Government, having by word and deed ignored the binding force of its engagements to Austria, had lost the right of ap-

pealing, as against Austria, to obligations which she herself had not respected.

'3. That the Imperial Government protested against the taking matters into her own hands (*Selbsthülfe*), whereby Prussia had violated Article XI. of the constitutional Act, and had brought on the case provided for by Article XIX. of the final Act of Vienna.*

'The Imperial Government moreover reserves to itself the faculty of taking all further measures and decisions, nothing else being left to it than to uphold its own consideration and honour, and to protect its disregarded right.'

It will be seen that, although actual conflict had been avoided in Holstein, Prussia had not shrunk from provoking it. She had indeed ejected the Austrian brigade, by force of arms, from the territory of which they were in possession by right of the stipulations of the Convention of Gastein. No sort of doubt could longer exist, even in minds most averse to contemplate such a grave contingency throughout the German Fatherland, that her children were actually involved in one of those disputes

* Art. XI. of the Constitutional Act, has already been given, see p. 153; Art. XIX. of the final Act of Vienna runs as follows:—'Should there be ground for apprehending the use of force between Confederates, or should such have taken place, the Diet has the duty of taking preliminary steps for staying all self-righting (*Selbsthülfe*), and for putting a stop thereto if begun. For this object, care is above all to be given to the maintenance of the existing right of possession.'

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which must come to a bloody issue; and all prospects of accommodation having proved delusive, the various tribes and sections of which the Confederation was composed, girded themselves for the struggle which many even amongst the subjects of Prussia bitterly inveighed against as a fratricidal contest.

June 11. On June 11, an extraordinary sitting of the Diet was convoked. In that memorable day, Austria moved that all the Federal contingents,* saving those of Prussia, should be mobilised and placed on their full war establishment, concentrated within fourteen days, and then ready to take the field within twenty-four hours.

The formation of reserves, the choice of a commander-in-chief, and other analogous measures formed part of the proposition.

Prussia replied by a counter-proposition, laying before the Diet a scheme of reform, and moving its immediate adoption.

This project contained ten articles, the most salient of which were the convocation of a national representative body to sit periodically, and the *exclusion of Austria from the Confederation.*

* The Federal Constitution provided that Austria should furnish the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd army corps; Prussia the 4th, 5th, and 6th; Bavaria, the 7th; Wurtemburg, Baden, and Grand-ducal Hesse, the 8th; Saxony, Electoral Hesse, Nassau, Lemburg, and Luxemburg, the 9th; whilst the 10th was to be composed of the troops of Hanover, Brunswick, Holstein, Lauenburg, Mecklenburg, Oldenburg, Lübeck, Bremen, and Hamburg.

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June 14.

The vote on the proposition of the Imperial Government was taken on June 14, and was carried on division by nine against six votes, the Prussian representative protesting against its being even taken into consideration.*

After the vote had passed, M. de Savigny made declaration, in the name of his Government—'that as, in spite of his protest, the Diet had pronounced their decree, he had the serious duty to discharge of making known the decisions taken by his Government, and to which they were driven to protect their rights.

'The introduction of the Austrian proposition was in flagrant contradiction with the Diet's Constitution, and, in the Prussian point of view, to be regarded as a breach of the constitution. The competence of the Diet extended only to Dietal execution.

'The position of Austria in Holstein was not

* It will be of some interest to the reader to see and weigh the votes as given on this memorable occasion, which decided the fate of the Diet itself. Voted for: Austria, Bavaria, Wurtemburg, Saxony, Hanover, Electoral and Grand-ducal Hesse; the 16th voice, or Curie, as these divisions were styled, comprising Lichstenstein, Waldeck, the two Principalities of Reuss, Lippe, Lippe-Schaumburg, and Hesse-Homburg; of the 12th Curie, Saxe-Meiningen; of the 13th Curie, Nassau; of the 17th Curie, Frankfort.

The minority was thus composed: Prussia, Holland—for Luxemburg and Limberg—the Saxon Duchies, the two Mecklenburgs, Brunswick, Oldenburg, Anhalt, the two Schwarzburgs, and the free towns of Hamburg, Bremen, and Lübeck.

Baden abstained from voting.

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under protection of any treaty of the Confederation, nor could the Emperor of Austria be regarded as member of the Confederation for Holstein. The Royal Cabinet had from the first considered the setting aside of the proposition as the only course indicated by right, on account of its illegal character.

'By the declaration of war pronounced against a member of the Confederation by the Austrian proposition, and the vote of the Governments adhering to her,—which according to Confederate law was impossible, the Royal Government holds the breach of Federal compact to have been consummated.

'The envoy consequently declares, in the name and by the orders of His Majesty the King, that Prussia henceforth regards the hitherto existing Federal compact as dissolved and no longer obligatory.

'His Majesty the King will not, however, regard the national basis on which the Diet was established as destroyed by the dissolution of the existing Confederation.'

Laying again before the Assembly the project of reform which Prussia had already presented to the German Governments by the circular of June 10, the envoy signified the readiness of his Government to found a new Confederation on the ancient basis, modified by such a reform, with those

Governments which were disposed to concur in the project. With this declaration his Excellency pronounced his participation in the proceedings of the Diet to be at an end.

The President of the Diet, Baron Kübeck, hereupon remarked, 'That the 1st Article of the Act of Confederation created an indissoluble association, in the unimpaired upholding of which all Germany, as well as each individual Confederate Government, had their right, and that, by the 5th Article of the final Act of Vienna, secession from this association was not within the competence of any of its members.

'As regards the actual much-to-be-lamented declaration of the Prussian envoy, the President must refer to the binding force of the Diet's decision, and on behalf of the high Assembly, and taking his stand on the above-cited bases, must pronounce the motives of the Prussian declaration to be legally and practically unfounded. He must, therefore, in the most formal and express terms, reserve all the rights and prerogatives of the Confederation, which continues to exist in the fulness of obligatory power.'

To this protest the majority of the Diet adhered.

Austria then signified to the Assembly that her three army corps, which formed the Imperial contingent of the Confederate force, were ready to march, and on the complete war footing.

On the 16th, notes were passed to the several European States, communicating the above-detailed June 16.

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particulars of the Diet's proceedings, and this last act of the Diet of the Germanic Confederation was characterised as having binding force on Prussia.

On June 15, the day next after these proceedings in Frankfort, identical notes were handed to the Governments of Saxony, Hanover,* and Hesse-Cassel, by the Prussian envoys at those courts, proffering guarantee of the sovereign rights of the rulers of those States, in case they sided with Prussia, but requiring positive answers on the evening of the day on which this summons was delivered.

The Saxon Government gave an immediate peremptory refusal, and the two other States making no answer within the prescribed time, declaration of war was instantly made by the Prussian Government against all three.

* For the mode of proceeding in Hanover, see note, p. 172.

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE ABORTIVE ATTEMPT AT A CONFERENCE—PUBLIC FEELING IN GERMANY ON THE OUTBREAK OF WAR—NATIONAL UNION AND PARTICULARISM.



A SLIGHT retrospect may here be fitly given to the attempts made by the other States of Europe to avert from Germany the evil of war, an effort in which England at least was wholly disinterested. Her Britannic Majesty's Government made proposals for a Conference in London. The objects proposed for discussion, and to which the Conference was to be confined, were: 1. The question of the Elbe Duchies. 2. The means of pacifying Italy. 3. The reform of the Diet, in so far as it concerned the European balance of power.

England, France, and Russia were agreed on the programme, and Austria, Prussia, and Italy, as well as a representative of the Diet, were invited to attend, Baron v. der Pfordten, the Bavarian envoy at Frankfort, was selected as plenipotentiary for the Confederation, and from this quarter at once arose a preliminary objection, the Diet maintaining that the question of Holstein, to say nothing of Schleswig, had always been considered as solely within the

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competence of the Diet. In like manner the organ of the expiring assembly arrogated for it the right of declining all foreign intervention in matters relating to its internal reform.

Whether these objections on the part of the Diet might have been overruled, it is immaterial to discuss, for Austria attached such conditions to her acceptance of the Conference as caused the whole project to fall through. The Imperial Government was much censured at the time, and had the objections openly raised been the sole motives that swayed the Austrian Cabinet, the censure would perhaps have been merited; but knowledge had reached them of Italian projects, and subsequent utterances of the French Government became known, which might well justify the mistrust with which the Austrian Cabinet regarded the apparently friendly and peace-promoting project.

Austria, in fact, made her acceptance of the Conference dependent on the condition that the question of Venetia should not be discussed, and this objection was fatal to the scheme.

The Imperial Government, however, was at that period informed that, on May 16, the Italian envoy at Paris, referring to the projected Conference in London, had addressed a despatch to his Government nearly in these terms: 'No absolute solution of the questions in dispute is put forward, but, as relates to Venetia, it is evident that the very

introduction of the question is equivalent to its solution. It can have none other than the cession by Austria to Italy. In his conversations with me the language of the French Minister of Foreign Affairs has entirely coincided with this view of the question.'

The opinions of the Emperor of the French, as regarded the Conference, were expressed in his Imperial Majesty's rescript, dated June 11, addressed to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs. This document contained the following passages: 'As regards ourselves, we desire to see the Middle States of the Germanic Confederation united more intimately and more powerfully organised, so as to play a more important part. We wish for Prussia greater homogeneity and augmentation of strength in the north, and for Austria the maintenance of her important position in Germany. It has moreover been our wish that Austria should cede Venetia to Italy for a reasonable indemnity; for as the Imperial Government, in alliance with Prussia, and disregarding the Treaty of 1852, has waged war with Denmark on behalf of German nationality, it seems to us only just that she should recognise the same principle in Italy, and accomplish the independence of the peninsula.'

It will be sufficiently clear that the Austrian Cabinet, knowing that one aim of the Conference would be to procure the cession of Venetia, had

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ample grounds, from their own point of view, for avoiding entanglement in negotiations repugnant to the principles on which the Imperial Government had hitherto acted. The wish expressed by the French Emperor for the maintenance of 'her important position in Germany' must have sounded in the ears of every Austrian as a bitter derision. Their confidence in the national strength was as yet religiously firm, and the possibility of the severance of the ancient and intimate ties between the Empire and the House of Hapsburg and Germany, must have seemed a monstrous improbability, the possibility of which nothing but its disastrous realisation could have forced on their apprehension. Many Austrians there were indeed (and their forecast was shared by a large majority of those in every country of Europe best able to judge of probabilities) who, without wishing for war with Prussia, felt no fear of an issue unfavourable to the Imperial cause in such a struggle, and who, seeing it was inevitable, entered on the contest full of heart and confiding in success. Count Rechberg himself indeed had been heard to say, 'Let it come.'

Throughout Germany, and largely (as has been observed already) in Prussia itself, the strongest possible repugnance and horror of the coming crisis was entertained. But among the Prussian troops the force of discipline, stronger than any individual shade of opinion, impelled the soldier unhesitatingly

against those who were pointed out to him as enemies to his country. Once engaged in actual contest, all reflection was soon drowned in the din of battle, while under able leadership, and stimulated by almost unvarying success, the Prussian army, each unit of whose mass was a citizen of one of the most highly educated states in Europe, soon gave another proof of the force of military discipline and habits, and, wielded with consummate ability, effected all that its most sanguine projectors and artificers could have expected from a sentient but obedient machine.*

In the body of the Fatherland itself, an infinitesimal minority may have looked forward hopefully to the possibility of the long-desired German unity being advanced by Prussia's problematical success, but not even the most advanced of these German patriots dreamt of so great a triumph as that which speedily crowned the Prussian arms. No one believed in the realisation of M. de Bismarck's fixed idea—the exclusion of Austria from Germany.

Nor, it may be added, did any individual member of the German Liberal party calculate or desire that Germany should become Prussian, but had indulged in fantasies of a liberalised and united

* Partial discontent was shown by one Landwehr regiment, at least, after the war was ended, at the mode in which they were sent to their homes, and a mutinous battalion was disarmed at Frankfort.

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Germany, which the Prussian premier, when master of the situation, was disposed neither to favour nor endure.

The status of Germany has rarely been well understood by foreigners. Writers and politicians of other countries have habitually confounded German with German, much as many of ourselves have done Indian with Indian, not realising the fact that there is almost as much difference between a Pomeranian and a native of Suabia as betwixt an Affghan and a Bengalee.

Perhaps the future historian of the events of 1866 will deem it astonishing that the Diet went on as long as it did, and be surprised at finding that, with the brief interlude of 1848–49, that imperfect institution sufficed to maintain all the Governments it embraced in internal tranquillity and safe from foreign aggression, from its creation in 1815 to the period of the extinction of the Confederation in 1866. It will be a study of no little interest to inquire how Austria maintained her supremacy, and with the general majority of these various tribes supporting her principles, swayed the policy of the Germanic race, till the strongest one among them rebelled, and overthrew the entire fabric.

During this whole period nothing will be found more astonishing than the recovery of Austrian influence in Germany, after the events of 1848-49.

The Imperial Government became indeed more than ever popular and influential, exciting not only increased jealousy on the part of her rival Prussia, but causing more than ordinary uneasiness to France. This inquietude on the part of the French Government was carried to such a point that, not venturing to attack Austria in Germany, the Emperor of the French found out her weak point in Italy, and humbled her at Magenta and Solferino.

But not even those disasters, or the ineptitude which led to them, cooled German sympathies for Austria, or raised them in behalf of Italy.

Austria encroached on no Confederate Government, meddled in the internal affairs of no people. Her Federal garrisons were highly disciplined, the soldiers singularly popular, and their officers polished gentlemen.*

Never dreaming of serious complications, still less of an open quarrel with Prussia, whose military resources her officers were in the habit of holding cheap, Austria, with a certain simplicity bordering on blindness, counted on the maintenance of the political *status quo*, and entertained no serious apprehensions of its interruption from any other cause than democratic influence.

That bugbear was at the root of all the misfor-

* In the not unfrequent quarrels between Austrian and Prussian troops in the Federal garrisons of Southern Germany, the populace almost invariably sided with the Austrians.

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tunes which have recently fallen on the dominions of the House of Hapsburg. It led the Imperial Government to ally itself with Prussia, under the insane persuasion that there was no other mode of checkmating German Liberalism, and regardless of the violation of all right and justice into which that alliance betrayed her as regarded Denmark. From that moment the moral position of Austria was lost. Close scrutiny exposed her astounding condition of material weakness. Ill held together, the several divisions of the Empire were each of them working for still further dislocation.

Even the army, so numerous on paper, was neither in numerical force nor in spirit in the efficient condition which its outward show seemingly denoted. When it came to the proof of combat, Italians and Hungarians fought feebly, and were made prisoners by thousands.

The administration was singularly defective and the troops had often to march and to fight, though within the confines of their own land, without that supply of food which is the primary base of military efficiency.

Austrian officers had seen and reported on the superiority of the needle-gun as the arm for infantry, having witnessed its effects in the Danish campaign, but it is well known that the bureaucrats of Vienna treated such representations slightingly, and said, 'Oh! our soldiers will treat these needle-gunners to

a taste of cold steel!' Alas for the victims of war! the breech-loading weapon swept away the serried ranks like straw beneath the scythe; and before the new arm, troops provided with the old weapon were perhaps at almost as great a disadvantage as were the spearmen of France at Cressy and Agincourt in face of the bowmen of England.

But, abandoning the consideration of Austrian errors, we may revert to the prevailing state of public feeling in Germany at the time. It has been frequently remarked that no greater proof could have been given of the difficulties which unity would still have to encounter in Germany than the strong evidences of Particularism—as they have themselves called the sentiment—which were evoked by the commencement of hostilities in Germany itself.

The population as well as the Governments of Wurtemburg and of Bavaria were strongly excited against Prussia, as disturbing the public peace. The majority of the Baden, Hessian, and Nassau people * shared that feeling, though the Government of Baden would fain have sided with Prussia. The conduct of the Hanoverian people, more signally than that of any other, showed, at the utmost risk and peril to their lives and fortunes,

* A forester in Nassau said to the author, 'Why don't they call on the people, instead of trusting only in their soldiers? It is a shame that we have not the chance of firing a shot for our Duke and our land!' A Black Forest peasant proprietor in Baden used very similar language.

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that they held dear above all things their loyalty to the House of Guelph and their separate nationality. The inhabitants of Electoral Hesse were not behind the Hanoverians in either sentiment, though governed by the most unpopular prince in Germany, so that their adherence to their small nationality and to their not beloved sovereign was the more remarkable.

Saxony gave unmistakable proof of the sentiments that animated both the nation and its Government, and bled and suffered by the side of Austria, as her true and loyal friend and ally.

Hanover and Electoral Hesse risked and lost their separate national existence, by the faithful adherence of their sovereigns to their Federal obligations, and of their people to their princes and to their military honour and duty.

Saxony went near to incurring the same fate, but Austria was in honour bound to stake all in behalf of so true an ally, and France also is known to have used her influence with effect, not unmindful of the fidelity of King John to his engagements with the first Napoleon.

Still the event of the war has shorn the ruler of that State of half his sovereign rights. His armed force and the resources of the land are henceforth at the disposal of Prussia; the King of Saxony, like all the other sovereigns of northern Germany, being in fact

reduced to the condition of a vicegerent of the Prussian monarchy.

As regards the northern States of Germany, they were so situated geographically as to be unable to show any active anti-Prussian tendencies, even had they felt disposed that way, save at risk of their political existence. The fate of Hanover and of Electoral Hesse would have been theirs, had they dared to move otherwise than as Prussia commanded. The troops of Oldenburg and of Mecklenburg * were employed by Prussia as reserves and in actual combat; while a corps of the Saxe-Coburg contingent took active part with the Prussians in the combat of Langensalza, and in subsequent operations.

It might have been supposed that ancient remembrances, and the slight political importance attaching to the free city of Frankfort, would have secured the small republic (for the Senate and local Government had observed strict neutrality) against any special exercise of Prussian power. This was by no means the case, and Frankfort, as will appear in the sequel, was not only dealt with as a conquered territory, but punished with unusual severity for the presumed anti-Prussian tendencies of the population of the republican free city. These feelings had recently been unmistakably expressed on the occasion of the respective departures from Frankfort

* In Bavaria, occupying Bayreuth and Nurnberg, and combating in the Odenwald, at the passage of the Tauber, &c.

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of the Austrian and Prussian troops forming the garrison of the free city, as ordered by the Diet in the sitting of June 2, referred to in the previous chapter.

The whole population of Frankfort gathered in the streets through which the Austrians marched, and at the railway station whence they were to take their departure. Flowers were showered on them by fair hands from the windows, cigars and refreshments of all kinds thrust into the railway carriages; the notabilities of society and of commerce joined wishes of speedy and happy return with their farewell benisons, while the ranks of the departing soldiers were eagerly scanned for hurried though tender adieux by 'the friends they left behind them.'

The regiment was Bohemian, very few of the privates speaking German, so that the demonstration was more markedly in favour of their nationality than if it had been a German battalion.

Very different was the scene on the departure of the Prussians. No Frankfurter bade them a fortunate journey (*glückliche Reise*), nor in fact were any of the inhabitants of the free city present at their departure, save those connected with the administration or with the railway management. These marks of public estrangement and disfavour, contrasted by them with the attachment shown towards the Austrians, were doubtless deeply resented; and

when the fortune of war speedily brought the Prussians back as masters, they unsparingly made the Frankfurters smart under their feelings of wounded self-love and national jealousy of Austria. But the mode in which this was done must be reserved for a future chapter.

## CHAPTER XVII.

OCCUPATION OF HANOVER, SAXONY, AND ELECTORAL HESSE—BANISHMENT OF ELECTOR TO STETTIN—STATE OF HANOVERIAN ARMY AND THAT OF ELECTORAL HESSE—MANŒUVRES OF HANOVERIANS AND PRUSSIANS BEFORE BATTLE OF LANGENSALZA.

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PRUSSIA'S plans for the campaign had been formed with admirable foresight and ability, and were at once acted upon with that energy and unfaltering decision which are usually forerunners of success.

June 15. On the evening of the day on which the States of Saxony, Hanover, and Electoral Hesse either gave unsatisfactory replies to the Prussian demands, or abstained from giving answers, war, as has been seen, was at once declared, and Prussian troops were actually put in motion on the 15th, for the occupation of the three States.

June 16. Saxony appealed to the Diet on June 16, but the Assembly could do no more than request the States which remained true to their Federal obligations to hasten their armaments, for the purpose of assisting their menaced confederates.

The danger of allowing any formidable coalition to come to a head between the northern and southern States adhering to the Confederation, which were

opposed to them on principle, had been long foreseen by the Prussian Cabinet, and measures arranged for the invasion and disarmament of Hanover and Electoral Hesse, which, promptly carried out, were partially successful.

The troops of both these States were unprepared for war, and although, by prompt retreat before the invading force, such portion of the contingent of either country as could be hastily assembled escaped for the moment, they were neither ready for movement nor for combat. Deficient in camp equipage, in means of transport, and in ammunition, they were surprised, in fact, into taking the field while on their peace establishment.*

The Prussian General, Vogel v. Falckenstein, had already, on June 13, received orders to hold himself in readiness to act on receiving orders by telegraph. Troops of his corps crossed the Elbe, and under colour of using the railroad for transport to Minden, Harburg was taken possession of by General v. Manteuffel's advanced guard at midnight, on June 15. The whole division crossed the Elbe on the following day, the advanced guard reaching Lüneburg,

* Captain Hozier, in his generally excellent work 'The Seven Weeks War,' referring to this portion of the contest, uses the phrase, p. 162, '*tardy measures and want of foresight*' in relation to Hanover: this is hardly fair. During neutrality, Hanover could make no preparations for war without provoking Prussia. It would have been more just to say, *Hanover confided too entirely in the rectitude of her powerful neighbour.*

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head-quarters occupying Harburg. Brunshausen, a fortified post on the Elbe, was likewise occupied;

June 17. and on the 17th, General v. Manteuffel summoned the fortress of Stade to surrender. The garrison was composed of a few infantry recruits and three companies of artillery, and could offer but slight resistance. A gate was blown in, and after the exchange of a few shots, the place was occupied by the attacking force, who captured there 34 pieces of artillery and 14,000 new rifles.

June 19. Emden, as well as the strand batteries on the Ems and the Weser, the latter having been abandoned and the former place surrendered, were occupied by the Prussian maritime force, between the 19th and 22nd.

Meanwhile, the division of General v. Goeben, marching from Minden by Stadhagen, entered Hanover on the evening of the 17th. The division under Manteuffel in two columns, moving by Lüneburg, on Hanover and Celle, entered the capital on the night of the 19th, while Flies's brigade reached

June 20. Celle on the 20th.

The division of General Beyer, which was to occupy the Electorate of Hesse, operated with equal celerity. Breaking up from Wetzlar, where they were concentrated, on the night of the 16th, one of the Prussian brigades reached Cassel by three forced marches on the 19th, and the remainder on June 20.

The Electorate of Hesse was totally unprepared for this movement. The Chamber indeed, on June 15, refused means for placing the contingent on the war footing, and demanded strict neutrality.

The Elector, taken by surprise,* found time to give directions to his small army, on the 16th, to march upon Fulda and Hanau, but they were unsupplied with all material necessary for taking the field, and especially ammunition. Still, the men of the land gave proof of their loyalty and fidelity to their colours by leaving their homes in considerable numbers, and joining the national force. Many of them did not join their several corps till they had reached Frankfort or Mayence, in which fortress the major part of this force was stationed in garrison, under the command of Prince Frederick William of Hesse, whose honourable conduct has been already noticed in these pages.

The Elector himself remained at his country palace of Wilhelmshöhe, where he underwent many vexations and annoyances, and whence his Royal Highness was eventually transferred under arrest to Bremen, by the express orders of the King of Prussia, and vainly protesting against the violence to which he was subjected.†

* His Royal Highness was, in fact, arrested by General Röder, who was accredited to him—a singular violation of international law.

† Cholera was rife at Bremen at the time of the Elector's removal thither.

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The immense advantage accruing to Prussia by the sudden occupation of these two States became at once apparent.

The troops of Hanover were about to be assembled for their customary autumnal manœuvres, but by means of the telegraph transmitting orders on June 15, nearly the whole army, excepting the three companies of artillery left at Stade and some small separate detachments, was assembled at Göt-
June 18. tingen on the 18th. The King and the Crown Prince reached that town on the 16th, and every effort was made to render the hurriedly concentrated force ready to take the field. The Queen and the Princesses courageously remained at Herrenhausen.

There were about 15,000 infantry, 2,000 of whom were recruits of only two months; 2,200 cavalry; and 42 field pieces. To these were added an ammunition train with 40 waggons, and a reserve force of 10 guns. The transport train was very inadequately composed of the means afforded by the country. Lieut.-General v. Arenttschild took command. The force was divided into four brigades of infantry, one reserve brigade of cavalry, consisting of two regiments, and one battery of artillery, with a reserve of 16 guns. Great difficulties attended this organisation, and many essential matters failed of completeness. Horses were especially deficient, and ten guns of the artillery depôt were horsed from the King's private stable. The field

hospitals and medical department were defective and ill-supplied. Zeal and loyal attachment to their sovereign and country made up, however, for many wants, and it will redound to the eternal credit of these noble soldiers of Hanover, that, in spite of all difficulties and discouragements, they followed their sovereign courageously and faithfully, and only laid down their arms at his command, after fighting nobly and victoriously for their King and country, and after numbers of them had sealed their loyalty with their blood.

Remembering England's recent dynastic connexion with this member of the late Germanic Confederation, the brotherhood in arms that long subsisted between us, and the close alliance by blood of our reigning house to the dethroned King, no true Englishman will find the tale tedious if the last days of the existence of the kingdom, the army, and the royal House of Hanover as sovereigns over that realm, are recounted in ample detail. Afflicted with blindness, the King must ever stand forth as a victim meriting more than ordinary interest. His Majesty was not even allowed the alternative of negotiating with the Prussian Government,* and after Langensalza might have said, with even more truth than Francis I. after Pavia, 'All is lost save honour!'

By June 18 much had already been effected in June 18.

* The alternative imposed on the King by Prussia was alliance against Austria, or war; and the latter within twelve hours, in case the former was declined.

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rendering Göttingen defensible. The railroads were made impassable, fieldworks thrown up in various directions, and the army held the position till the 20th.

The King had issued a proclamation on the 17th, which was as follows:—

'*To my Faithful People,*

'His Majesty the King of Prussia has declared war against me.

'This has been done because I refused to engage in an alliance affecting the independence of my throne and of my kingdom, and calculated materially to impair my honour and kingly right and to trench on the well-being of my faithful people.

'Such an abasement would have been against my right, and contrary to my duty; and because I rejected it, the enemy has invaded my land.

'I leave for the present the indefensible royal residence, the Queen, and my daughters the Princesses, as dear pledges of my trust, to the faithful inhabitants of my capital, and, with the Crown Prince, have betaken myself whither my duty called, in the south of my kingdom, to my faithful army, rapidly assembling at my summons.

'From hence I address my words to my faithful people. Remain true to your King under the pressure of foreign domination. Be constant, in the mutability of the times that are coming. Be sted-

fast, as were your fathers, who for the House of Guelph and for their fatherland, fought and finally conquered in near and in distant lands; and hope with me that Almighty God is infallibly guiding the eternal decrees of right and justice to a glorious end.

'Surrounded by my truly devoted army, which is prepared for every sacrifice, I unite my prayers with those of the Crown Prince for your welfare.

'My faith is in God. My trust is rooted in your fidelity!

(Signed) 'GEORGE R.

'Dated at Göttingen, the 17th of June.'

General v. Arenttschildt also put forth a spirited order of the day, well calculated to excite the loyal feelings and courage of the gallant men under his command.

With the knowledge possessed by the Hanoverian General that the Bavarians were gathering on the Maine, and the 8th army corps assembling at Frankfort, it was unfortunate that the instant the small Hanoverian army was able to move, it was not decided to seek a junction with one or other of these friendly bodies of troops. Diversity of counsel was perhaps not unnatural under the difficulty of the situation; but though it was difficult to gain trustworthy information as to the plans of the enemy, it might be supposed that the simplest reasoning would

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have shown which was the only strategical plan that promised safety.

It was not, then, till the evening of June 20, that a decision to move was taken, and on the morning of the following day the army began its march, intended to be directed upon Eisenach. The march through Thuringia seemed to present the best prospect of junction with the allied forces, and to be in every way preferable to the chances offered by awaiting an attack at Göttingen, or of retiring on the Hartz Mountains. By the latter plan, indeed, defence might have been prolonged, but the army would have had to rely solely on its own unaided resources.

Heiligenstadt was reached on the 21st, with the rear-guard at Geismar. The advanced guard formed by Bülow's brigade stood at Helmsdorf, on the road to Mülhausen. On the 22nd some slight alterations were made in the intended direction of one of the columns into which the army was divided, Prussian troops being reported to be marching on Eschwege.

The position of the army on the evening of this day was as follows:—The main body at Seebach; the advanced guard, with a battery of horse artillery, at Heroldshausen, with outposts at Gross-Göttern; Bothmer's brigade at Eingerieden, outposts at Wanfried; de Vaux's brigade at Struth; Knesebeck's brigade at Mülhausen, outposts at Felchta; the reserve cavalry at Höhngeda; head-quarters and reserve artillery at Mülhausen; rear-guard

at Dingelstädt. Nothing, as yet, had been seen of the Prussians, beyond a patrol of hussars, on the 21st, near the village of Hohengandern. A Prussian detachment was reported by the advanced posts to have been, on the morning of the 22nd, at a village named Langula, but to have retired as the Hanoverians came forward. The country was woody, and presented many positions of easy defence, while it was poor in all resources for an army.

It was desired, above all things, to avoid combat as long as possible, and at the same time to reach a district richer in supplies. The plan of march on Eisenach was here therefore again somewhat changed, chiefly from the apprehension of finding the Pass of the Hainich Valley in possession of the enemy, and it was decided to march on Langensalza.

This town was occupied, and advanced posts pushed on to Heningsleben and Merxleben, on the road to Gotha, without any encounter. Bülow's brigade marched to Oster-Behringen, with advanced guard at Gross-Behringen, and outposts towards Sonneborn and Gotha. Bothmer's brigade took post at Gross-Göttern. Head-quarters were established at Langensalza; the rear-guard rested at Mülhausen. The entrance of the Hainich Valley was examined by a strong reconnaissance, but no Prussians were seen in that direction.

The Prussian Commander-in-Chief v. Falckenstein had meanwhile marched from Hanover in

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pursuit. Aware of the assembling of the Hanoverian army at Göttingen, he could form no other conclusion than that their first object would be to seek a junction with the Bavarians, or with the 8th army corps. As to the latter force, he was well aware of their imperfect organisation, and that he had little to apprehend from their moving to meet the Hanoverians. As regarded the Bavarians, it was uncertain whether their operations would be directed in concert with the Austrians, or independently. Their forces, at least, were in a position to assist the Hanoverians. The movements of the Prussians, therefore, were in the first place directed to prevent any such juncture, and to attack the Hanoverian army while still isolated. On the 22nd, while marching on Göttingen, they obtained authentic intelligence of the departure thence of the Hanoverians. Pushing on from Nordheim, General v. Goeben's troops entered Göttingen on the afternoon of that day.

The railroad was re-established in working order, and Manteuffel's division reached Nordheim on the 22nd, establishing communication with the division of General v. Goeben. General v. Falckenstein had his head-quarters in Nordheim on the 22nd, and in Göttingen on the 23rd. Here the Prussian force halted for a day. A false report of an engagement between the troops under the Prussian General Beyer, who had occupied Cassel, and the Hanoverians, at Mülhausen, and of the retreat of the latter on

Heiligenstadt, had reached the Prussian head-quarters, and caused a reconnaissance to be sent in that direction. Not finding the enemy, Wrangel's brigade, which had been detached for this service, returned to Göttingen in the evening.

General Beyer had, indeed, been ordered, after taking possession of Cassel, to march on the Werra, to observe the points of passage over that stream, and to oppose the escape of the Hanoverians in that direction.

This movement had been carried out in such a manner that, had the Hanoverian commander obtained correct information of the disposition of the forces opposed to him, there is little doubt but that he could have forced his way.

Eisenach was not at all, or only feebly, occupied by the Prussians up to the 23rd, when two battalions of the Guard, hurriedly sent from Berlin by railroad, took post there, as a strong detachment of Prussian Landwehr infantry and two battalions of Gotha troops, which had received orders to occupy Eisenach, commanded by the colonel of the Coburg-Gotha regiment, Fabeck, had countermarched on Gotha, alarmed by the seeming march of the Hanoverians upon that place.

The subsequent admirable conduct of the Hanoverian army justifies the presumption that if, on June 24, they had made a serious effort to force a passage, either by way of Gotha or by Eisenach, they would have succeeded.

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Unhappily, the irremediable error of entering into negotiations was at this time committed by those who controlled the movements of the retiring force.

It was well known on that day that Eisenach was feebly held by the Prussians; and for a time the seasonable counsel of attempting to cut through the opposing forces in that direction prevailed. By what fatality it was not persisted in will be presently seen.

A Prussian officer in the Gotha service, Captain v. Zielberg,* had already, on the 23rd, been received by the Hanoverians, bringing a proposition of surrender, as it was said they were surrounded on all sides; but the assumption was untrue. Goeben's division was still at Göttingen, Manteuffel's at Nordheim, Beyer's only on the march upon Eisenach; that place and Gotha being feebly held. This officer's commission to treat appearing doubtful, he was detained at head-quarters; but the King of Hanover, disinclined to show unwillingness to negotiate, sent Staff-Major v. Jacobi to Gotha,† to inquire as to

* The captain bore no flag of truce as every parliamentary ought invariably to do. Moreover, the telegram purporting to come from Berlin, which he exhibited, was simply signed *Moltcke*, without annexation of any quality. The communication, therefore, was justly open to suspicion.

† Major v. Jacobi exceeded his instructions. His error may have arisen from certain differences which existed between the views of the King of Hanover and of his Majesty's staff. There was a leaning on their part to negotiation, from other motives than repugnance to the shedding of blood; while this humane idea would seem to be the only motive which prompted His Majesty to entertain the idea.

the *bona fides* of Captain v. Zielberg's mission, and to see whether there was room for negotiation.

The Major demanded by telegraph of the Prussian General v. Moltcke, that a free passage should be left to the army of Hanover, under engagement to take no part in the war.

On his return to head-quarters, at Langensalza, Major v. Jacobi reported that there were considerable forces in Gotha, and that the division Goeben was said to have come there from Hanover by the railway, which was an altogether erroneous report.

The advance under these circumstances appeared at Hanoverian head-quarters to be hazardous, and, in hopes of a favourable issue to the negotiations initiated at Berlin, the fatal resolution was taken of abandoning the movement on Eisenach, which had been ordered for the following day.

Before, however, the counter-order had reached the Hanoverian force detached for the attack on that point, under Colonel v. Bülow, a summons had been sent at nine in the morning to the Prussian commandant, Colonel Osten-Sacken, with his two battalions of the Prussian Guard, to evacuate the town before three in the afternoon. This summons the Prussian commander rejected.

The Hanoverians, meanwhile, had detached troops to the westward, who held the defile of Stockhausen, and had also rendered the railroad leading to Gotha impassable.

Lieutenant-Colonel Rudorff brought such intelli-

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gence to head-quarters at Langensalza, at 10·30 A.M., as convinced the King that the reports previously given him of the Prussians' strength were fallacious. His Majesty saw, at last, that the enemy only sought to gain time, and orders were issued at 11 A.M. to break off all negotiations, and the attack upon Eisenach was ordered.

Colonel Bülow was directed to advance on Stockhausen, to send in a second summons to Colonel Osten-Sacken, requiring him to evacuate at three o'clock, and, on his failing so to do, to attack in half-an-hour.

The movements of the main body in support, and for formation of a rear-guard, in case of an attack from Gotha were arranged; and, all necessary steps being taken, the King sent Captain v. der Wense to Gotha to recall Adjutant-General Colonel Dammers, who, on the morning of the 24th, had gone there with Major v. Jacobi, for the object of continuing negotiations.

Colonel Dammers,* in virtue of the authority with which the King had invested him, had drawn up conditions, which were forwarded to Berlin, with a recommendatory telegram from the Duke of Coburg. This telegram, which is published in M. de Seebach's† pamphlet in defence of the Duke of Coburg's con-

* Vide Appendix, No. IX., for this officer's declaration as to an armistice, which M. de Seebach's pamphlet erroneously states he had concluded.

† Minister of State in Gotha.

duct, addressed to M. Onno Klopp,* was despatched at 11 A.M. on the morning of the 24th. Knowing what followed later in the day, it is difficult to conceive anything more damnatory of the Duke's proceedings than this piece of evidence which M. de Seebach tenders in his Highness' exculpation. The telegram ran as follows :—

'*To His Majesty the King, Berlin.*

'The King of Hanover has requested my intervention through Adjutant-General Dammers, which I have thought advisable not to refuse.

'I earnestly recommend acceptance of the terms proposed. The position of our operating troops is precarious. General Beyer is too far to the rear, General Glümer not to be found. According to Colonel Dammers' word of honour, the Hanoverian army, about 18,000 strong, with fifty-six guns, is in no way demoralised, and holds a closely concentrated position in our front.

'We are unable, therefore, to prevent their troops cutting their way through in the direction of Gotha and Eisenach, and at the same time we have no cavalry at our disposal. The attack will take place to-day, unless the capitulation is concluded. Colonel Dammers, therefore, awaits a reply, with the briefest possible delay.

(Signed) 'DUKE OF COBURG.'

* The well-known archivist of the King of Hanover, who answered M. de Seebach conclusively.

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In executing his mission Captain v. der Wense had met Adjutant-General Colonel Dammers already returning to Langensalza, but Major v. Jacobi was induced to remain at Gotha, though Captain v. der Wense's orders embraced his return also.

In the course of the day, the Duke of Coburg had sent the King of Hanover a telegram received from M. de Bismarck, by which free march to the south was offered the Hanoverians, on condition of their engaging not to bear arms against Prussia for a year, but requiring, as a preliminary, that they should give guarantees, the nature of which would be precisely stated by the King of Prussia's Adjutant-General v. Alvensleben, who would for that purpose be sent to Eisenach.

To this communication the King of Hanover made this written reply to the Duke of Coburg:—

'Most Serene Prince, &c.,

'Your Highness has just sent me a telegram from the Prussian Minister President, M. de Bismarck, by my Captain v. der Wense, according to which his Majesty the King of Prussia assents to the proposition made through my Staff-Major v. Jacobi, for the passage of my army through the Thuringian States, but puts forward the condition that my army should give guarantees for not taking any part in hostilities for the space of one year.

'Your Highness will understand that I cannot

entertain such a condition, nor can I make the delay of military operations dependent on negotiations to that effect. Great prejudice has already accrued to them from your Highness having yesterday sent me, as a parliamentary, your Captain v. Zielberg, not duly accredited. I can permit no farther delay in operations, and must consequently request your Highness to send back to me my Major v. Jacobi.

'On the other hand, I am willingly disposed to enter on negotiations with General v. Alvensleben, his Majesty's Adjutant-General, whom the King of Prussia has sent to me, for the purpose of avoiding all bloodshed, and, as far as it may be possible, all suffering to the population.

'With highest consideration, I remain your Highness' friendly disposed Cousin,

(Signed) 'GEORGE R.

'Dated at Langensalza, the 24th of June, 1866.'

Meanwhile, the Hanoverian troops moved forwards as soon as their orders reached them, and the advanced guard of Bülow's brigade marched on Eisenach. Lieutenant-Colonel Knipping occupied Mechterstedt, broke up the railroad and telegraph, and was already driving in the Prussian skirmishers, when a telegram from Major v. Jacobi, from Gotha, was put into his hand to the following effect:—

'*Hostilities are to be avoided, as the conditions* June 24.

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*laid down by Hanover in the negotiations have found acceptance on the part of Prussia.'*

The 'cease firing' and 'the recall' were instantly sounded and obeyed, and both on the side of Mechterstedt and Eisenach hostile movements were stayed. On the same evening, towards 7 P.M., for the purpose of sparing his troops needless outpost duty and fatigue, Colonel v. Bülow—on the faith of the telegram, but without communication with his commander-in-chief—made a temporary suspension of arms with Colonel Osten-Sacken till 8 o'clock on the next morning, with three hours' warning before recommencing hostilities.

Had the telegram above given not been sent, Eisenach would have been occupied by the Hanoverian army on the evening of the 24th. The line of retreat by the Valley of the Werra would have been open to them; and though they would doubtless have been closely pursued, there were no Prussian troops to bar the road, and the major part of this small army would doubtless have reached Brückenau, or Fulda, and formed junction with the Bavarians, under Prince Charles, before they could have suffered any serious disaster.

What influence such a contingency might have had on the ultimate issue of the campaign, is for the soldier and diplomatist to speculate upon. It would, probably have obliged the Prussians to detach forces from their Elbe army, in order to cope successfully

with the new combination; and it is impossible to say what might have been the result of their subsequent hardy advance into Bohemia, had it been made with some 70,000 fewer men, or whether the whole course of operations would not have been necessarily modified.

Now there exists no sort of doubt that Major v. Jacobi—as is clear from the King of Hanover's letter to the Duke of Coburg—was ordered to break off negotiations, and to rejoin head-quarters. On what grounds, therefore, his remaining in Gotha can be explained, and still more how this officer is to be justified for sending the false telegram, remains in some degree an enigma.* It was generally believed at the time, that the detention was not without purpose, and that the telegram, presumed to come from Major v. Jacobi, bore indeed his signature, but was, in fact, one of those stratagems of war which the ethics of belligerents look upon as justifiable and even meritorious.

But the Duke of Saxe-Coburg was regarded by the King of Hanover as the natural intermediary betwixt

* The author can state from authority that Captain v. der Wense informed the Duke of Coburg that negotiations were broken off. Major v. Jacobi then had no other pretext for remaining in Gotha than to escort to Hanoverian head-quarters the Prussian officer announced as about to come from Berlin. When that officer failed to arrive, it was the Major's first duty to quit Gotha. He allowed himself to be induced to stay by the Duke, and thus was made the instrument of sending the telegram which had such momentous results. The capitulation alone saved the major from standing before a court-martial.

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himself and the King of Prussia. How the Duke availed himself of his position to delay the march of the Hanoverians, in the first place by means of Captain v. Zielberg's mission, and subsequently to stay hostilities, actually commenced, by the telegram signed by Major v. Jacobi, has been narrated in no spirit of hostility to his Highness. The Duke's intentions probably were to bring about the surrender of the Hanoverians by negotiation, and without bloodshed. The result was that they did not escape, as they infallibly would have done, by way of Eisenach, and that they had to fight at Langensalza.

June 24-25. The King of Hanover must have experienced a cruel deception when, on reaching the troops before Eisenach on the evening of the 24th, in full confidence of finding the place in their possession, he discovered the actual position of affairs.

Under existing circumstances, nothing was to be done but to take up the best apparent camping-ground.

The advanced guard of Bülow's brigade remained then in front of Eisenach; the main body at Stockhausen and Gross-Lieppnitz; the detachment under Colonel Knipping, and the reserve cavalry, in and around Mechterstedt; de Vaux's brigade at Haina. Knesebeck's brigade, with its rear-guard at Langensalza, stood at Henningsleben and Grumbach, with outposts at Tungeda and Grâfen Tonna; head-quarters were at Gross-Behringen, and remained there till the morning of the 20th.

During the whole of the 25th the Hanoverian army held these posts in complete inactivity—a precious interval lost by them, but turned to good account by their adversary.

In the persuasion that no other course lay open to the Hanoverians than that of seeking junction with the Bavarians, and not believing it possible to prevent it, Lieut.-General v. Falckenstein had, on the 24th, caused the divisions Goeben and Manteuffel to countermarch towards Cassel, with the intention of acting with the three divisions at his disposal in concentrated force, and rendering the presumed junction as little dangerous as possible. When, however, he found that, from some inexplicable cause, the Hanoverians did not show intentions of continuing their movement in the apprehended direction, the Lieutenant-General, having also received renewed orders from Berlin, resolved on an immediate attack.

On the 25th, Lieut.-General v. Alvensleben reached the Hanoverian head-quarters, but it was speedily found impossible to accept the propositions for a guarantee which his instructions required.

The result of his negotiations was a suspension of arms 'until further arranged' (*bis auf weiteres*); and the King engaged to send a definitive reply to Berlin on the following morning by 10 A.M.

The division of General Beyer, meanwhile, made little progress towards Eisenach, chiefly on account of the great heat and the fatigue of his men. None of

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his troops had reached that town up to the morning of the 25th. On the other hand, on receipt of orders from General v. Falckenstein, Lieut.-General v. Goeben moved from Cassel upon Eisenach, on the afternoon of the 24th, and in the course of that evening and night despatched six battalions, two squadrons of horse, and three and-a-half batteries by railway, to that town.

General v. Manteuffel also sent strong reinforcements by the route of Magdeburg and Halle to Gotha.

June 25.

On the evening of June 25, the Prussian force was thus disposed:—At Gotha, Major-General Flies, with thirteen battalions of infantry, three squadrons of cavalry, and four batteries of artillery; at Eisenach, Lieut.-General v. Goeben, with twelve battalions, four squadrons, and four and a half batteries; at Kreuzburg and Treffurt, Major-General v. Glumer, with eight battalions, two squadrons, and one battery of Beyer's division; in Cassel, the remainder of Goeben's division, and the troops under Major-General Wrangel; at Göttingen and Munden, three battalions, two squadrons, and one battery in the first-named town, four battalions, six squadrons, and two batteries in the last, all belonging to Manteuffel's division. The Prussian head-quarters were transferred on this day to Eisenach; Lieutenant-General v. Falckenstein in person arrived there about three in the afternoon.

Thus, while the Hanoverian commanders had remained inactive, their enemy had been closing in upon them, and not only were Beyer's division and the troops under Colonel Fabeck in dangerous proximity, but portions of Goeben's and Manteuffel's divisions found time to advance almost within striking distance.

On the 25th, the King of Hanover sent Colonel Rudorff, by way of Eisenach, to Berlin with his answer to the propositions brought by Lieutenant General v. Alvensleben. This officer, however, was sent back from Eisenach, by Lieutenant-General v. Falckenstein, with a notification that, being uninformed of any suspension of arms made by Lieut.-General v. Alvensleben, he could not acknowledge such a convention and would attack.

The decision was immediately taken at Hanoverian head-quarters to recall Bülow's brigade from before Eisenach, exposed as it now was at any moment to be attacked by superior forces; and, late in the evening, these troops reached Gross-Behringen.

General v. Arenttschildt had at length arrived at the conviction that, in spite of all seeming readiness to treat on the Prussian side, and of real desire to come to an understanding on the part of the King his master, he was on the point of being attacked.

The Hanoverian army was therefore concentrated, on the morning of June 26, between Gross and Oster Behringen, with Knesebeck's brigade at Hen- June 26.

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ningsleben, in order to protect the retreat on Langensalza in case of a repulse.

A Prussian parliamentary, however, appeared at five in the morning, with intelligence that Lieut.-General v. Falckenstein would respect the suspension of arms which had been notified to him from Berlin; and hereupon the Hanoverian army broke up into somewhat dislocated cantonments, in and around Langensalza, and here head-quarters were once more established.

Whilst de Vaux's brigade was marching from Henningsleben on Langensalza, they were surprised by receiving a message from the Prussians that they would attack in half an hour.

Detachments of Bothmer's brigade also found themselves in presence of Prussian cavalry, which showed hostile intentions. Colonel de Vaux consequently halted at Henningsleben, gathered up the scattered detachments of Bothmer's corps, and awaited orders from head-quarters.

The Hanoverians, it seems, expected an express denunciation of the suspension of arms concluded 'until further provided for;' the Prussians seem to have understood that it ended at 10 A.M. on the 26th, as the promised answer of the King of Hanover did not arrive at Berlin. This, however, arose from the bearer of the King's reply having been stopped at Eisenach, on the 25th, by Lieut.-General v. Falckenstein; and when it was again sought to

send Lieut.-Colonel Rudorff, by way of Gotha, on the 26th, Major-General Flies, who had meanwhile arrived there and taken command, refused to allow him to proceed further.

Major-General Flies gave out that the suspension of arms had expired at 10 A.M. on the 26th; that he had orders, as he said, to advance, and would only delay his movement for a couple of hours.

Lieut.-Colonel Rudorff returned to the Hanoverian head-quarters with this intelligence, and General v. Arenttschildt, in the expectation of being momentarily attacked, made the following dispositions:—

Sondershausen was to be the rallying point, and each brigade had orders to retreat fighting on that place.

De Vaux's brigade was concentrated to the south of Langensalza.

Bülow's brigade, with the reserve artillery, near Schönstadt.

Bothmer's and de Vaux's brigades to act in concert, and hold Gräfen Tonna.

Knesebeck's brigade, with the reserve cavalry between Sundhausen and Thamsbrück, on the high road to Sondershausen, to cover the retreat.

It will be seen that the Hanoverian commander-in-chief, in full expectation of being pressed by superior forces, only made dispositions for a defensive retreat.

The Prussians, however, did not carry out their

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announced intentions, and for the remainder of the day left the Hanoverians unmolested. In all probability the menace of immediate attack was a mere feint, intended to induce the King of Hanover to yield to the Prussian proposals. It was at least a singular coincidence that, while the Hanoverians were under the impression that Lieutenant-General v. Falckenstein was on the point of commencing hostilities, the Prussian Colonel Döring laid before the King a despatch from M. de Bismarck, which he read to his Majesty, containing the propositions already made on June 15. On the King's declaring to this officer that these propositions were inadmissible, the Prussian colonel said it was of little consequence, as their troops were already advancing.

The menace, if as such it was intended, had no influence whatever on the King's resolutions.

Had the Prussian proposition found acceptance, the King and his army would have been covered with mortification, for they would have yielded without that final struggle which shed a halo of imperishable glory on their last act of heroic self-sacrifice and devotion. The course of events, moreover, would hardly have been altered in such degree as to have saved the throne, for if even a nominal independence had been reserved for the House of Guelph, it would have been so restricted and shorn of regal prerogative, that its existence in the mockery of sovereignty would have been an humiliation more galling than total suppression.

PLAN
OF THE
BATTLE OF LANGENSALZA,
27th June, 1866.
FIRST POSITION.
Kirchheilingen
Lit. Welsbach
Gr. Welsbach
Sundhausen
Thamsbrück
Clettstedt
Merxleben
Schönstedt
Gr. Vargula
LANGENSALZA
Nägelstadt
Ufhoven
Grossen Tonna
Illeben
Ilgenngsleben
Eckartsleben
Grumbach

# CHAPTER XVIII.

## BATTLE OF LANGENSALZA.

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BEFORE recounting the stirring events of June 27, it is of no little interest to examine what was done by the Bavarians and by the 8th army corps to lend a hand to their hardly-pressed confederates of Hanover. June 27.

The King had every reason to count on aid and assistance from one or other, if not from both directions. His Majesty had given full notice of the critical position in which he stood, on June 19 and 21, both to Prince Charles of Bavaria* and to Prince Alexander of Hesse. Every motive would, it might be judged, have impelled these leaders of allied forces to hasten to the relief of their imperilled brother-in-arms; but the efforts made were tardy and wanting in energy, and resulted in lamentable failure.

* Captain Hozier, in his account of these transactions, makes Prince Charles reply to the demand of aid from the King of Hanover—that 19,000 men ought to cut their own way through. This might be quite true; but neither his Highness nor the Hanoverians knew in which direction they had the best prospect of doing so, and the Bavarian movements to give assistance failed in energy and promptitude.

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It was not till the 23rd that the Bavarians began to move. Prince Alexander of Hesse had sent a small force to Giessen on the 22nd, but there it was halted, and speedily withdrawn. The Bavarians marched toward Fulda, but got no further than Neustadt, by the 25th, while their cavalry reached Meiningen only on the night of the 26th.

Reports of their advance by way of Fulda reached the Prussian head-quarters, and it was erroneously said that their outposts had reached Vacha.

Dispositions to oppose this advance became, however, necessary on the Prussian side, and were so far favourable to the Hanoverians that they compelled the Prussians to attack on the 27th, with a much smaller force than would otherwise have been at their disposal.

Had not Lieut.-General v. Falckenstein received orders from Berlin to respect the suspension of arms made by Lieut.-General v. Alvensleben, he would have commenced hostilities on the 26th.

The truce, however, was not so closely observed as to restrain the Prussians from moving troops in preparation for action the moment it was denounced. Major-General Flies was directed, on the morning of the 26th, to follow closely the movements of the Hanoverians. The two battalions of the Prussian Guard were transferred from Eisenach to Gotha. Lieut.-General v. Goeben was charged with observing the Bavarian advance, and held Eisenach,

while Lieut.-General v. Beyer had to send detachments, with a like object, to Berka and Gerstungen.

A false rumour had reached the Prussian commander-in-chief that the Hanoverians were marching northwards towards Mülhausen. When Major-General Flies found that this was not the case, but that they stood fast at Langensalza, that General took post at Hochheim.

Lieutenant-General v. Falckenstein ordered him to observe the Hanoverians as closely as possible, and, awaiting the result of Colonel Döring's mission to the King of Hanover, the Prussian troops bivouacked by Warza.

The King, as has been previously narrated, rejected the propositions brought to him by that officer; but whilst the hours were fast drawing to the moment of decision, conflicting reports of the movements of the Hanoverians reached Lieut.-General v. Falckenstein, coming by telegraph from Berlin, and it was notified to him in this way, on the night of the 26th, that they had broken up from Langensalza, and were about to march upon Tennstedt-Sömmerda, so as to gain the Hartz.

This intelligence caused orders to be given to Major-General v. Manteuffel to march on Heiligenstadt and Mülhausen, in order to bar the route of the Hanoverians towards the mountains.

They, meanwhile, were taking up the defensive position on the Unstrut, the judicious choice of which was to be tested on the morrow. June 26.

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Simultaneously with the orders sent from Berlin to Lieutenant-General v. Falckenstein to lose no time in attacking the Hanoverians, before they could be joined by the Bavarians, similar orders were telegraphed to Major-General Flies, and that officer decided on obeying them on the morning of the 27th, although he could only count on the force under his own immediate command. He was aware that General v. Goeben was watching the Bavarians, while General v. Manteuffel, in pursuance of the instructions received on the night of the 26th, was already too far removed from the scene of action to take part in the fortunes of the day.

On the morning of the eventful 27th of July, the small Hanoverian army was thus disposed, on the borders of the little river Unstrut:—Bulow's brigade, with the reserve artillery, on the right; one battalion of infantry and two squadrons occupied the village of Thamsbrück, guarding the flank towards Mülhausen. De Vaux's brigade, was in the centre, at Merxleben, and one battalion in the village. A battalion of the 3rd regiment had been left in Langensalza, with orders to retire on Merxleben, if attacked by superior forces.

The Cambridge dragoons were stationed as outposts at Henningsleben. Bothmer's brigade held the left wing towards Nägelstedt, with one battalion at the bridge over the Unstrut, and one squadron and a half guarding the flank towards Tennstedt and

Bruckstedt; the reserve was composed of Knesebeck's brigade, and was drawn up in rear of the centre, north of Merxleben; the reserve cavalry and a battery of reserve artillery were near Sundhausen. Ammunition waggons, artillery depôt, and army train, with the baggage, were placed at Kirchheiligen, where also such hospital dispositions were made as were found possible. Head-quarters were in Merxleben—the King at Thamsbrück.

The Hanoverian front was covered by the Unstrut. From Thamsbrück to below Merxleben, this stream, some forty feet in breadth and three feet or four feet in depth, has steep banks, cut through the soil, and, lower down towards Nägelstedt, is of varying depth, but the banks are higher, and it is nowhere easily fordable, even in chosen spots, by infantry, and impassable for cavalry or artillery, save by the bridges.

The village of Merxleben, together with the Kirch-Berg, an eminence to the southward, is the key of the position.

The difficulty of approach is also greatly increased by the road to the S.W. running, for about 80 yards, between a bank from ten feet to fourteen feet high, and the Salza brook.

This conformation of the ground was of great service eventually to the Prussians, when compelled to assume the defensive, for it effectually obstructed the seasonable employment of the Hanoverian superior force, which was seriously impeded in crossing the stream at the decisive moment.

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On their right flank, which was most exposed, the Hanoverians began to throw up some entrenchments on the left bank of the Unstrut, between Thamsbrück and Merxleben. These field-works were to be armed by ten guns of the artillery depôt, and were laboured at from early morning till past midday.

June 27, 7·30 A.M. Major-General v. Flies began his march from Warza upon Langensalza about half-past seven in the morning. His force, all told, amounted to 8,150 infantry, 225 cavalry, and 24 guns, six of which only were rifled pieces.*

11 A.M. About 11 A.M., the Prussian advanced guard, composed of the two Coburg-Gotha battalions, the Land-

* This enumeration, taken from Prussian official returns, is said to be underrated by the Hanoverians, who estimate their opponents as stronger, especially in guns.

They affirm that the Prussians brought into action fifteen battalions of infantry, viz :—

| | | battalions |
|---|---|---|
| Landwehr, No. 71 | | 1 |
| 20, 25, 27, 32 | Of the line | 2, 3, 1, 2 |
| 11th Silesian Grenadiers | | 3 |
| 4th Regiment of Foot Guards | | 1 |
| Gotha Regiment | | 2 |
| | | 15 |

Also one regiment of field artillery, the 6th Silesian, with 3 batteries; 1 battery of 4-pounder rifled guns, and one of smooth-bored 12-pounders; together with 3 squadrons of cavalry. If the batteries were on the full establishment, there would have been 40 guns. This, however, was probably not the case, and some of the infantry battalions were incomplete.

wehr Hussars No. 12, and five pieces of artillery, under Colonel v. Fabeck, reached the entrance of Langensalza, watched by the retiring Hanoverian cavalry. The Hanoverian battalion stationed in the town offered but slight resistance, retreating through the town on the Jüden Hügel, where Colonel v. Strube meant to make a stand; but finding his force outflanked by a Coburg battalion, which had marched round Langensalza, on the eastern side, and being under artillery fire in front, the Hanoverian leader speedily drew towards the Unstrut and Merxleben.

The attack had at first been reported at Hanoverian head-quarters as a reconnaissance in strength. Orders were therefore given about ten o'clock to Knesebeck's brigade to march upon Henningsleben, to take possession of the heights there, if possible, before the enemy reached them; and Bothmer's brigade, from Nägelstedt, received orders, in case the enemy gained ground, to fall on his right flank.

In following out his orders, General Knesebeck had already passed the defile by Merxleben, with a portion of his brigade, when he encountered the retreating Cambridge Dragoons. Informed of the strength of the attacking columns, the general formed his troops on either side of the road, and held his ground against the advancing Prussians, till all the Hanoverians who had been posted on the right of the Unstrut had traversed the defile leading to Merxleben. General Knesebeck's troops

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then followed them in perfect order, and his brigade resumed the reserved position which they had

11.30 A.M.

occupied in the morning. In this movement the Hanoverians suffered slight loss, the engagement being as yet limited to a combat of skirmishers.

Meanwhile, the Prussian artillery, which first took post on the Jüden Hügel, found themselves at once engaged by the superior fire of the Hanoverian guns from the Kirch-Berg, and could with difficulty maintain their position. They were eventually supported by the eight guns of the advanced guard.

The King, meanwhile, and the Prince Royal had taken post on the high ground close to the road from Thamsbrück to Merxleben, and with their attendants formed a group which evidently drew the attention of the Prussian gunners, and was honoured with several rounds from their guns on the Jüden Hügel.

By midday, no Hanoverian remained on the right bank of the Unstrut. The Prussian columns had successively reached the Jüden Hügel, and posted themselves there, and in the Bath Wood. The

Noon.

artillery duel was in warm progress, but the hostile guns were separated by a distance of more than 1,500 yards. The Hanoverian guns of Bothmer's brigade were however speedily advanced some 200 yards nearer to the Prussian position, and their fire took the enemy's artillery somewhat in flank.

A Prussian detachment was advanced about this

time for the protection of the left flank, and pushing on as far as Thamsbrück, on the left bank of the Unstrut, found it unoccupied; but Hanoverian dragoons and a battalion of infantry were just outside the village, and a fusillade was kept up between them for a considerable time.

Now came the principal and front attack upon the centre at Merxleben. The second battalion of the Prussian 25th regiment, with three companies of Coburg troops, advanced along the high road in columns of companies, and deployed between Gräser's manufactory and the Bath Wood. The left wing of this body waded through the Salza brook, and opened fire on the Hanoverian columns formed by Merxleben. A single company was repulsed in an effort to cross the bridge over the Unstrut; but, under the fire of that portion of these troops which had occupied the Bath Wood, a certain number of their comrades, wading the stream, fired on the artillery on the Kirch-Berg, with such effect as to compel the withdrawal of the three 12-pounders posted there.

Lieutenant-General v. Arenttschildt had by this time discovered that he was attacked by only a portion of the Prussian force, and conceived that he ran no great risk in allowing them to exhaust themselves in their attack, resolving speedily to assume the offensive.

About this period of the combat also, General 12.30 P.M.

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v. Bothmer had sent word that he was preparing to pass the Unstrut and attack the Prussian right flank. Orders to perform a similar manœuvre were instantly sent to Bülow's brigade on the left. The artillery on the Kirch-Berg was reinforced, Knesebeck's brigade and the reserve cavalry were drawn nearer to Merxleben, and de Vaux's brigade ordered to support the attack of the other two brigades, as they gained ground.

Some error in the first movement, ordered by General Bothmer, caused the third rifle battalion, which was directed to cover the passage of the Unstrut, to diverge too much to the right, and thus prevented them from executing their orders to aid in the attack. Vain attempts were made by the pioneers to establish means of passage over the Unstrut, and the first battalions of the 6th and 7th Hanoverian regiments, supported by the second battalions, gallantly plunged into the stream. The greater portion of the men of the 7th, swimming or wading, reached the right bank, but the Prussians had foreseen the movement, and strengthened their force on this flank.

Major-General v. Seckendorff, with the first line of the Prussian reserve, occupied the ground, and posted his men so judiciously in the ditches and inclosures that the Hanoverians were forced back. Once more these faithful troops renewed the attempt, but with their ammunition damaged, and only able

to use the bayonet, they were attacked by two Prussian battalions, and again driven across the stream, with the loss of one-fourth of their officers, and a proportionate number of men. The first battalion of the 6th regiment had no better fortune. Few men of this corps struggled through the river, and they were unable to hold their footing. Thus the nature of the ground, well chosen for defence, paralysed the action of an entire brigade, when the fortune of the day led to the assumption of the offensive.

The battery of Bothmer's brigade, under Captain Müller, had about the same time sustained such heavy loss from the Prussian fire, that the guns had to be withdrawn at the most critical moment, and General Bothmer found himself compelled to abandon the attack, and withdraw his men to the adjacent high ground—a position which he held till the conclusion of the battle.

Better fortune attended the Hanoverian attack on the Prussian left flank.

Bülow's brigade, with the two first battalions of the 4th and 5th regiments of the line, and the second battalion of rifles, with the second battalions of the 4th and 5th following, began to move on the Unstrut about 1 o'clock, crossed the stream within the half-hour, and drove back the Prussian 25th regiment of the line and 11th Grenadiers, taking position in the interval betwixt the Unstrut and Salza. 1 P.M.

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The artillery fire had meanwhile greatly slackened. The Prussians had altogether withdrawn two howitzers, which had been reduced to a couple of charges per gun. The three 12-pounder Hanoverian guns had at the same time retired from the Kirch-Berg, and their two 6-pounder batteries, which had likewise occupied that post, had been withdrawn, one to refit, the other from some misapprehension; and Müller's battery of Bothmer's brigade had abandoned its flank position.

1.30 P.M. The infantry combat was becoming proportionately hotter. The first and second battalions of the Hanoverian regiment of the Guard, of v. Knesebeck's brigade, which had latterly stood hard on the banks of the Unstrut, now also crossed the stream, and took post beside v. Bülow's brigade. This officer, before passing the river, had detached the dragoon regiment of the Crown Prince, and the battery attached to his brigade, to observe the Prussian detachment which had shown itself at Thamsbrück.

Two squadrons of the Queen's Hussars had followed v. Bülow's brigade, and were formed in the narrow space between the Salza Bridge and Kallenberg's Mill. The two other squadrons of this regiment came hurriedly forward, and in the dust and smoke, not seeing their comrades at halt, rode through and through their ranks, so that men and horses were overthrown, either into the Salza or the Unstrut. Some men fell over the bridge of the

Unstrut into the stream. Order, however, was quickly restored, and, for want of room, the last squadron was withdrawn to Merxleben.

Von Bülow's right wing meanwhile was advancing. The 2nd Rifles and second battalion of the Guard took part in the storming of Kallenberg's Mill, and greatly contributed to the capture of that important post. Both battalions, however, suffered heavily, and when the slope of the Jüden Hügel was cleared of the enemy's infantry, they were stationed behind the mill as a reserve.

The first battalion of the 5th regiment pushed on towards the summit of the Jüden Hügel, under a heavy fire, crossed the Salza east of Gräser's manufactory, and took the Rasen Mill, into which they threw two companies. The skirmishers of the two other companies fired on the Prussian battery still posted on the Jüden Hügel, gained ground steadily, and finally occupied the post, the Prussians relinquishing its further defence.

Colonel Knipping, in command of the first battalion of the 4th regiment, stormed and took Gräser's manufactory, which was held by two companies of Prussians and some Coburg-Gotha troops, and made prisoners two officers and some twenty men.

An attack by three companies of the 1st Hanoverian Guards' battalion on the hospital and tileworks failed, though gallantly persisted in, and supported

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by a battalion of the 4th of the line; nor was it till the second battalion of the 5th line regiment from the reserve came up, that the stubborn resistance of the Prussians on this point was overcome.

2 P.M. The heights were occupied by the Hanoverian 4th and the first battalion of the 5th regiment. In their retreat from the town of Langensalza the Prussians lost many prisoners, principally of the 11th regiment of the line.

About this hour Major-General Flies appears to have given general orders to retreat. The main object of the attack had been obtained, the detention, namely, of the Hanoverian forces; and it was desirable to retire from further combat with as

3.30 P.M. little loss as possible. The retreat had been delayed to the last moment consistent with prudence—the retiring troops were, indeed, already being fired upon from the rear as well as the flank.

Major v. Hammerstein, with the regiment of Cambridge Dragoons, had, by orders of Colonel de Vaux, descended the Unstrut to Nägelstedt, and there crossed to the right bank. This regiment instantly pushed on towards Illeben, and was therefore in a position whence it could act on the flank and rear of such Prussian detachments as still held advanced posts.

Major-General v. Seckendorff, finding his line of retreat thus threatened, drew off his troops in the direction of Henningsleben.

The two guns of the Erfurt sortie battery endeavoured to cover the retreat of the infantry, but were charged by the Hanoverian cavalry. Many of the gunners were cut down, but the distinguished Hanoverian Captain Einem fell, and the fire of the infantry, for the moment, prevented the guns from being carried off. The Prussian accounts say that the horses took fright, and that the guns got entangled in a hollow way, whence no efforts could extricate them. The Hanoverians, however, found means of doing so, and carried off these trophies of their victory; and later in the evening, when both armies had rested from the fight, and the Duke of Coburg sent a detachment with horses and harness to bring the guns off, they had already found their way to the Hanoverian lines.

By half-past three o'clock all the Prussian troops, excepting those holding the Bath and Bath Wood, were in full retreat. The fire of the guns once more occupying the Kirch-Berg was concentrated on this point; the first battalion of the Royal Life Guards, from Merxleben, and the reserve cavalry, were also ordered to advance.

At this juncture, and for a second time in the day occurred the mishap of a body of cavalry riding into one of their own regiments while at halt. The Queen's Hussars stood on the road between the embankment and the Salza, not having yet got the order to advance, when the Body-guard came upon

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them at a sharp trot, and many severe accidents and great confusion were the consequences.

The horse-artillery battery attached to the reserve cavalry, commanded by Captain Röttger, very promptly took advantage of the involuntary arrest of their advance, to unlimber and support the attack of the infantry by a heavy fire of grape upon the Bath.

The whole of the Hanoverian infantry of the centre was now moving to the attack; the obstinate and gallant defence of the Prussians could no longer be maintained, and the troops of the right wing had, as has been seen, already drawn off in the direction of the Siechenhof, towards the Henningsleben road. The Prussian troops defending the Bath Wood do not appear to have received the general order to retreat issued by Major-General Flies, and their escape from destruction, or from having to lay down their arms, did them the greatest honour.

4 P.M. By four o'clock the success of the Hanoverians was complete; General v. Arenttschildt then occupied himself with posting his infantry securely, and left the pursuit of the Prussians to his cavalry. The several brigades of infantry were concentrated in and about Langensalza; the single battalion of the King's Life Guard, which had been in reserve, joined with the cavalry in following the retreating enemy.

On the high ground south of Langensalza, the reserve cavalry, on attaining the plateau, saw two Prussian battalions formed in square, a few hundred

yards to their front. These were the first battalion of the 11th Grenadiers, commanded by Lieut.-Colonel des Barres, and a battalion formed of several different corps: there were men of the 11th, the 71st Landwehr, and 25th regiments of the line, and of the 20th Brandenburg Landwehr, with some Coburg-Gotha troops, under the orders of Captain v. Rosenberg, all of which had been engaged, first in the attack, and secondly in defence of the Bath Wood.

The regiment of Cambridge Dragoons, whose flank march had led to the retreat of the Prussian right wing, was already advancing on the square, under Lieut.-Colonel des Barres, and Major Hammerstein was in the act of summoning this officer to lay down his arms, when the Body-guard charged the other square, so that all parley was broken off.

This Prussian square held its ground stoutly, and the cavalry attack failed.

Lieut.-Colonel des Barres' square was charged nearly at the same moment by the cuirassiers of the Guard, and on another face by the Cambridge Dragoons. The square was shaken, and some of the charging horsemen broke into the ranks; but the cavalry suffered heavily, nearly all the officers being struck down.

The bulk of this battalion speedily reformed, and was charged a second time by two squadrons of the cuirassiers, who were handsomely repulsed. Several

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small bodies of the Prussians, however, were cut off from their comrades, and made prisoners; but when it is borne in mind that the whole of these troops had been on foot since daybreak, and had been marching and fighting since 7.30 A.M. in an almost tropical heat, the courage and steadiness they showed under these trying circumstances can hardly be too highly estimated.

The horse-artillery battery commanded by Captain Röttger had used every effort to follow the cavalry, but two of the pieces had stuck fast in swampy ground, and two others had been overturned on the narrow causeway. Two guns only,

4.30 P.M.

then, commanded by Lieutenant Lichart, were brought to the support of the cavalry, and these pieces fired the last shots, which were directed against the retreating Prussians.

The cavalry now gave up further pursuit, but many scattered men fell into their hands.

The first battalion of the King's Life Guard (infantry) was unable to keep up with the rapidly-moving cavalry farther than the Siechenhof, in and about which point they made about 200 prisoners. The Hanoverians, by 5 P.M., occupied the ground on which their advanced posts had stood in the early morning of the day of battle, whilst the Prussians were in full retreat, without being pursued beyond Henningsleben.

A brief contest, however, was still carried on,

upon the extreme right of the Hanoverian position. The Prussian detachment at Thamsbrück did not begin their retreat thence till towards 4 P.M. Two squadrons of the Crown Prince's Dragoons, and the men who had been employed on the fieldworks, together with Captain Egger's battery, followed, but failed to overtake them. The ground over which their retreat commenced was swampy, and intersected by numerous ditches and drains, so that this detachment, which was pursued till near six o'clock, escaped with but trifling loss, occasioned by the fire of the Hanoverian artillery.

The success of the Hanoverians was dearly purchased. Their own returns give 22 officers killed, 80 wounded, 356 men killed, 971 wounded; the total loss being 1,429 officers and men, and about 300 killed and wounded horses.

The Prussian returns include the loss of the Coburg-Gotha troops, and give a total of 170 killed, including 11 officers, and 643 wounded, 30 of whom were officers, and 33 men missing.

The Hanoverians, however, claim to have made 907 prisoners, 10 of whom were officers, and to have captured 2 guns, and about 2,000 stand of small arms.

As the progress of events allowed the whole of the Prussian prisoners to rejoin their colours on the day after the action, they may stand absolved from any charge of concealment as regards their return of losses.

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The Prussians had gallantly, perhaps imprudently, attacked a force superior to their own in numbers. Their attack was bravely and successfully resisted although one Hanoverian brigade had no share in the combat, and the Prussians were repulsed with loss; but their object of arresting the movements of the Hanoverian army was fully attained.

Time had been gained. The Prussian forces within reach were drawn together, as soon as the result of the action became known; and not many hours elapsed before the Hanoverians found themselves really surrounded by more than 40,000 hostile troops, and nothing remained for them but to obtain terms of honourable capitulation.

PLAN
OF THE
BATTLE OF LANGENSALZA,
27th June, 1866.
POSITIONS AT CLOSE OF THE BATTLE.
Kirchheilingen
Lit. Welsbach
Gr. Welsbach
Sundhausen
Thamsbrück
Clettstedt
Merxleben
Schönstedt
Gr. Vargula
LANGENSALZA
Nägelstadt
Uthoven
Graefen Tonna
Illeben
Illeanngsleben
Eckartsleben
Grumbach
Hanoverian Troops
Prussian Troops

## CHAPTER XIX.

### SURRENDER OF THE HANOVERIAN ARMY.



THE King took up his quarters for the night in Langensalza, and, together with a letter of thanks to General v. Arenttschildt, issued the following order of the day:—

'Brave Soldiers,—With zeal never yet equalled, and promptitude unexampled in history, you gathered at my summons in the south of my kingdom, and when, together with my son the Crown Prince, I marched at your head to Southern Germany, you remained true to your colours, to the sacred rights of my throne, and to the freedom and independence of our beloved country.

'This day, combating with the valour of your forefathers, in presence of myself and of my son and successor, in the battle-field of Langensalza, under the most gracious protection of the Almighty for our holy cause, you have won a glorious victory.

'The names of the brave men who have fallen will shine in our annals with imperishable lustre,

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and God will reward them in His heavenly kingdom. Let our hands be raised together to Him in praise and thankfulness. And you, brave and loyal soldiers! accept your Sovereign's ever-during thanks.

'With all his house, and with you, he commends our cause to the will of God and of His Son, supplicating their blessing for our cause, which, as rightful, is God's own.'

During the night a superior officer (Colonel Rudorff) was sent to the Prussian head-quarters, to demand a suspension of arms for the purpose of collecting the wounded and burying the dead. He was also charged to renew the proposals for a free passage, the Hanoverians engaging to abstain from hostilities.

General v. Flies accorded time to bury the dead, and promised his good offices in furtherance of the other demands. He was no doubt already informed that he would be speedily reinforced, and that but few hours would elapse before the Hanoverians would be surrounded by overwhelming forces.

Telegraphing to Berlin, he received an answer, which he was enabled to communicate to the Hanoverian head-quarters by nine in the evening—that the Prussian Government refused all further proposals.

June 28. On the morning of June 28, a council of war sat at Langensalza, and, after mature deliberation, agreed

on the following memorandum, which was at once laid before the King.

'The undersigned declare hereby, on our honour as soldiers, and in faith of the oath sworn to our King and master, before God and our consciences.

'1. That the men and horses of the army of Hanover, originally, since the 19th of the month, imperfectly equipped, through continued forced marches, generally ill-provisioned, and yesterday's obstinate combat, entailing a loss of officers and under-officers prejudicial to their efficiency, are much exhausted, and incapable of continuing operations without previous rest.

'2. That the ammunition, without the possibility of obtaining any fresh supply, is only sufficient for one more serious conflict.

'3. That, by the experience made, and the reports of the Commissariat, the supply of the requisite provisions in sufficient quantity is impossible.

'4. That in several directions the troops of the enemy are collected in considerable force, have surrounded the Hanoverian army, and that no speedy change can be hoped for in the military situation by succour from friendly troops.

'Under these circumstances, we can but regard any further combat or resistance as useless and a vain shedding of blood, and can only recommend his Majesty the King, according to our dutiful convic-

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tion, to renounce resistance, and accept a capitulation.'

The signatures were :—

'Von ARENTTSCHILDT, Lieutenant-General.
'Von KNESEBECK, Major-General.
'Von WREDE, Major-General.
'Von BOTHMER, Major-General.
'Von BÜLOW STOLLE, Colonel.
'De VAUX, Colonel.
'DAMMERS, Colonel and Adjutant-General.
'Von STOLZENBERG, Colonel.
'Von GEYSO, Colonel.
'CORDEMAN, Colonel.'

In consequence, the King instructed Lieutenant-General v. Arenttschildt to treat for a capitulation, and to notify this instruction to Major-General v. Flies.

The Prussian commander-in-chief, General v. Falckenstein, had meanwhile reached Eisenach, and by him the terms of capitulation were drawn up. Major v. Wiebe took the document in the evening to the Hanoverian head-quarters, and the terms were accepted by Lieutenant-General v. Arenttschildt, with the proviso that if General v. Manteuffel, who, he had learnt meanwhile, was designated from Berlin to conclude terms, offered more favourable conditions, the convention brought by Major v. Wiebe should not be valid.

In effect, when General v. Manteuffel reached the head-quarters on the 29th, it was found that the terms granted by the King of Prussia's special command were more honourable, as well as less severe, for the Hanoverian army, than the unconditional surrender stipulated with Lieutenant-General v. Falckenstein. June 29.

It must not be left unnoticed that, when it became known among the troops that negotiations for a capitulation were on foot, dissatisfaction was loudly and generally expressed, and the men required to be again led to the combat.

The King, however, under the wise advice of his commanding officers, chose the only prudent issue from their perilous situation, and the convention was signed. It was as follows:—

'His Majesty the King, my most gracious sovereign, has granted the following additions to the capitulation signed this morning between the General of infantry, Baron v. Falckenstein, and General v. Arenttschildt, in command of the army of his Majesty the King of Hanover.

'His Majesty the King has, in the first place, commanded that his highest recognition of the gallant conduct of the Hanoverian troops should be recorded.

'The following points are next established:—

'1. His Majesty the King of Hanover, with the Crown Prince, and with such suite as His Majesty is

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pleased to select, may fix his residence at His Majesty's pleasure anywhere, except in the realm of Hanover. His Majesty's private property remains at his high disposal.

'2. The officers and civilians of the royal Hanoverian army engage, on their word of honour, not to serve against Prussia; they retain their arms, baggage, and horses, and shall in future receive their pay and peculiarities (*Gesammtbeziige*), and stand in the same relation to the Prussian administration of the kingdom of Hanover, as to their rights and pretensions, as they have hitherto held towards the kingdom of Hanover.

'3. The under-officers and soldiers of the Hanoverian army give up their arms, horses, and ammunition to the officers and employés to be designated by the King of Hanover, and return to their homes by echellons, as shall be fixed, and by railroad, under the engagement not to serve against Prussia.

'4. The arms, horses, and every description of material of war of the Hanoverian army are to be handed over by the above-named officers and employés to Prussian commissioners.*

'5. At the express wish of the General Commanding-in-Chief von Arenttschildt, the retention of

* The arms and equipment surrendered to the Prussians were highly serviceable, and two batteries of artillery were at once organised from Hanoverian *matériel.*

their pay is specially insured to the under-officers of the royal Hanoverian army.

'(Lieut.-General) VON ARENTTSCHILDT.

'(Lieut.-General) FRHR. VON MANTEUFFEL.

'Langensalza, the 29th of June, 1866.'

Such were the conditions graciously accorded by His Majesty the King of Prussia to his brother sovereign in his extremity.

It is impossible to withhold from these loyal Hanoverians, who followed their king to Langensalza, those feelings of sympathy and admiration always accorded to manly courage and constancy, struggling against overwhelming forces.

The House of Guelph had deserved, and won, the attachment of the Hanoverian people. Thousands more of his subjects were only prevented by the suddenness of the Prussian attack from testifying their fidelity to their King and to his house, in as earnest a manner as those who nobly followed their sovereign to his last not inglorious struggle for his rights.

Whether the separate existence of the Hanoverian kingdom, or its absorption by its powerful neighbour, is most conducive to the prosperity of the land and the happiness of its people, are questions which time alone can solve; but the abstract problems of right and of expediency will in this, as in all similar

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cases, be pronounced upon as men's judgments are swayed by their interests or their passions.

The conduct of Prussia is to be judged rather by the rule of expediency than by the standard of justice. The King of Hanover's blindness—as it doubtless enhanced the intensity of loyal attachment felt for his person by his subjects—adds a certain poignancy to the universal sentiment of respectful commiseration with which the world in general regards a sovereign robbed of his throne and of his rights by foreign spoliation.

If the circumstances are placed in the light in which the enemies of Prussia desire that they should be viewed, viz., that a brother sovereign treacherously attacked and drove a confederate prince from his dominions, because he asserted those rights to the faithful maintenance of which both were equally and solemnly bound, and because the possession of the neighbouring State was highly to be desired, and advantageous to his own dominions, the conduct of the King of Prussia would stand forth as an exaggerated repetition of the tale of the vineyard of Naboth.

But this would be to take a prosaic and limited view of that grand political combination which added 2,300 square miles and nearly 4,000,000 new subjects to the kingdom of Prussia, consolidated a country which had hitherto been geographically dislocated, and conferred on the people of

second and third rate States such as Hanover, Cassel, Nassau, and Frankfort the honour and advantage of becoming subjects of the puissant realm which, though still called the kingdom of Prussia, is destined, as some believe, to gather the whole German Fatherland under its Imperial sceptre!

The real Prussian says to this day, that he is astonished at the moderation of his Government; that the whole costs of the war ought to have been charged to the vanquished members of the Confederation who dared to raise a hand against Prussia; and that Saxony should have shared the fate of Hanover.

'*Væ victis*' and 'Might makes right' are indeed as much the axioms of modern policy as they were in the days of heathendom, and the God of battles is quite as rationally sought to be propitiated by the 'Te Deum' of the modern conqueror as Jupiter Stator by the 'pæans' of a Roman triumph.

Prussia, however, will find it a work of time to blot out the memories of separate tribal independence ingrained in Hanover and some of the other populations which she has annexed, and to assimilate the habits of these peace-loving races to her own military completeness.

With singular adroitness, the statesman who directs her government has shaped and fashioned the idea of German unity for the special benefit of Prussia. Still there exist earnest German men who

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hold the idea of unity to be an invention of ideologists and university professors; who are persuaded, moreover, that it is wholly at variance with all their national traditions, and that no political state can be preferable to that fractional distribution which hitherto satisfied all reasonable cravings for unification by federative ties. Danger too, they say, is being prepared for Europe by the ambition of Prussia under the centralising and absolutist tendencies of the House of Hohenzollern, which has destroyed the peace-promoting combinations of a past age, and enabled this new *Cæsarism* to organise the vast means at its disposal for future conquest. Never, as these politicians affirm, will the greed of the rulers of Prussia be satisfied till she has absorbed Denmark and the Netherlands!

## CHAPTER XX.

ASSEMBLING OF EIGHTH ARMY CORPS AT FRANKFORT—DEPARTURE OF DIET—MANŒUVRES OF THE FORCE UNDER PRINCE ALEXANDER OF HESSE, AND OF THE BAVARIANS—VARIOUS COMBATS.



BEFORE detailing the immediate consequences of the battle of Langensalza, and the surrender of the Hanoverian army, it is necessary to relate what was being done by the other States which adhered to the Federal Constitution and obeyed the orders of the Diet. So early as May 12 a conference of the ministers and chiefs of the staff of the three States contributing to the 8th army corps, had met for the purpose of concerting military measures at Bruchsal, in Baden; and soon afterwards a fuller meeting of representatives of Bavaria, Saxony, Wurtemburg, Baden, the Grand Duchy of Hesse, and Nassau, assembled at Munich for the same purpose.

Bavaria proposed to place 46,000 men immediately on the full war footing, to raise six further battalions within a few days, and ten more within a month, and to bring her army eventually to the strength of 110,000 men.

Wurtemburg promised to have 20,000 men disposable in a fortnight, concentrated between Lud-

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wigsburg and Heilbronn, and in another month to put on foot a urther combined brigade, besides the garrison of Ulm.

Baden could in fourteen days assemble thirteen battalions, twelve squadrons, and four batteries of artillery at Bruchsal, and complete her contingent to the full war footing in a month.

The Grand Duchy of Hesse had already nine battalions, eight squadrons, and four batteries ready to take the field, and stationed either at Worms, Darmstadt, or Offenbach.

Saxony had concentrated at Dresden and its immediate vicinity 25,000 men, 6,600 horse, and 58 guns, and reliefs to the number of 5,000 would be assembled at Sayda in four weeks.

Nassau would have her brigade, consisting of five battalions and sixteen guns, ready to march in fourteen days.

The commander-in-chief, it was arranged, should be named, and his staff formed, as soon as possible.

Until the 9th army corps was formed, the Nassau brigade was to be attached to the 8th corps.

When the Diet's decision, of June 14, called these troops into immediate activity, the faultiness of Federal military arrangements became instantly apparent, and it was manifest that a much longer term would be required to prepare the several contingents to take the field in such an efficient state of preparation as modern warfare demands. The as-

sembling, and training of horses especially, was very imperfectly accomplished, and the cavalry, artillery, and train were accordingly ill provided, and their efficiency proportionately imperfect.

On June 16 and 17 the troops of Hesse-Darmstadt, and on the 18th and succeeding days the Wurtemburg, Baden, Nassau, and Austrian brigades, the last under General Hahn, were assembled in and about Frankfort.

The command was given to Prince Alexander of Hesse, who had distinguished himself in the Austrian service, and who lost no time in organising the forces put under his orders in as efficient a manner as the somewhat heterogeneous elements at his disposal allowed.

The pressing appeal of the Hanoverians for assistance to disengage them from their perilous position reached Prince Alexander's head-quarters on the 21st. The organisation of the various corps under his orders was still so incomplete that the Prince was unable to take any effective steps to aid the Hanoverians; but, detaching a small force to Giessen, he sent an invitation to the Bavarian commander-in-chief requesting him to despatch a division towards Fulda.

I have already shown * how this combination broke down, and how, through the fatal concurrence of deception and consequent indecision, the

* See Chap. XVII.

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Hanoverians were held back, while the Bavarians marched with a slowness and amount of precaution ill suited to the emergency, and lamentably failed to succour their hardly beset northern brothers in arms.

The first object of the assemblage of the 8th army corps was the protection of Frankfort as the seat of the Diet; and up to the date of the tidings of the surrender of the Hanoverian army, after their victory at Langensalza, the manœuvres of Prince Alexander's corps, which amounted to nearly 50,000 men, with 136 guns, were directed chiefly to that object.

Prince Alexander, however, was under the superior orders of Prince Charles of Bavaria—a commander whose great age unfitted him for active service, while his training in the wars of a preceding generation had given him little experience of the exigencies of modern warfare. Instead of energetically using the considerable force at his disposal, which was assembled on the Upper Main, for offensive operations, his Royal Highness already, before the Hanoverian disaster was known, had concerted with Prince Alexander a movement for the junction of the 7th and 8th army corps under his own immediate command, for the purpose of attacking the Prussians, supposed to be in force in the neighbourhood of Eisenach. The time, however, required for concentration, in view of such an operation, gave the Prussians ample opportunity to act on the offensive,

and, though operating with inferior force, to inflict serious losses both on the Bavarians and on Prince Alexander's corps, as will be seen in the sequel.

Prince Alexander had been desirous of marching upon Cassel, a movement which would probably have secured Frankfort, and by compelling the Prussians to retrograde, for the defence of their own country, have obviated any of those attacks on Bavarian territory which subsequently took place, and which were invited by the dilatory and ill-combined proceedings of the two army corps with which the Prussians had to deal. Prince Charles issued orders for another line of march for the 8th army corps to effect a junction with the 7th, as soon as he learnt that the Hanoverians had capitulated.

The march of Prince Alexander's corps through the Vogelsberg, in the direction first intended, was countermanded, and Prince Charles directed that all disposable troops should join him, by way of Hanau, Fulda, and Hünfeld, and, using the railway as far as Gmünden, march upon Kissingen. This order implied abandonment of Frankfort; moreover, when the order reached the head-quarters of Prince Alexander, the execution was rendered difficult, if not impracticable, by the disposition of the troops under his command. He had good reason to expect that his march would not be uninterrupted by the Prussians, and his troops were so dislocated that the risk was considerable. His

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Highness, therefore, altered the direction of his march, and instead of taking the road by Alsfeldt, his columns were directed upon Fulda by Ulrichstein and Lauterbach.

The weather was unfavourable, as heavy rain fell; the country was bare of supplies, and the troops, badly fed, and being without tents, suffered much. The details of the marches and countermarches of this corps may, however, well be spared, as they would interest few but military readers.

July 5. On the morning of July 5, the 8th army corps was in full march upon Fulda, and the patrols were in communication with the Bavarian general, Prince Taxis, whose cavalry held that town.

The 1st division reached Lauterbach.

The 4th division only reached Hüngen and Nidda.

The 2nd division held Giessen and Wetzlar, with outposts advanced as far as Marburg.

Head-quarters were at Eisenbach.

The Prussians on their side were pushing on towards Fulda, and had been seen at Marbach; and measures were being taken on Prince Alexander's part for further concentration and for sending out reconnaissances.

Meanwhile various unfavourable rumours began to reach head-quarters. The Bavarian cavalry was reported to have fallen in unexpectedly with a body of Prussian infantry in a wood beyond Fulda, and to

have suffered a sharp repulse, and it was said that both on the 4th and 5th encounters had taken place between the Prussians and Bavarians in the Wiesenthal, at Dermbach, and at Zella, in which the latter were worsted, and that the Bavarians were in full retreat.

As regards the first of these encounters, the reserve cavalry of the Bavarian army, which had been sent forward from Schweinfurt, had reached Fulda on the 3rd. Finding himself quite isolated, Prince Taxis, the commander, had asked for support from the 8th army corps, but Prince Alexander of Hesse had found himself unable to detach troops for that purpose. The Bavarians therefore advanced alone, and, singularly enough, with two regiments of cuirassiers and half a battery of 12-pounder guns as advanced guard.

Towards seven in the morning of the 4th, the advanced guard of Beyer's Prussian division, marching upon Hünfeld, found the Bavarians in their front. July 4.

The Bavarian guns opened on the Prussian column, but as soon as the Prussians brought a couple of 4-pounder rifled pieces into action, the Bavarians hastily retreated, leaving one of their guns behind. The Prussian artillery pursued, but so rapid was the flight of the Bavarians that they lost only 28 men. This whole body of cavalry, influenced by the example of the cuirassiers, and feeling themselves insecure in a wooded and mountainous district, beat

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a hasty retreat, scarcely halting at Fulda, in the direction of Bischofsheim. In the evening, while the column was traversing a wood, before reaching the village of Gersfeld, a sudden panic arose, and, in the persuasion that their retreat was cut off by the Prussians, the entire body of horse appears to have precipitated itself in wild flight on the road to Brückenau.

Prince Taxis in person kept part of the force together, and, with the three regiments of cuirassiers, and the battery of horse artillery, seems to have maintained some degree of military order. Forming a rear-guard they occupied the Pass of Döllbach towards break of day on July 5.

July 5. Some of these panic-stricken troopers never drew rein till they reached Brückenau or even Hammelburg, and several days elapsed before they were again gathered to their standards at Brückenau. Some of them had even reached the Main, spreading alarm and consternation in their route.*

The Prussians, in fact, had interposed between the 8th army corps and the Bavarians, and that great object of strategy was effected of being able to fall on either of the opposing armies while their efforts at junction exposed them to attack in unfavourable positions, the Prussians holding the centre, while their opponents could no longer safely come together otherwise than by describing a considerable arc of a circle.

* The subsequent behaviour of the Bavarian cavalry at Rossbrunn well-nigh obliterated the stain of the Gersfeld panic

The other engagements had all been favourable to the Prussian arms, although the Bavarians had fought gallantly; and, saving that the Prussians made a certain number of prisoners, the loss in killed and wounded was very evenly balanced.

Towards midday on the 5th the following telegram reached the head-quarters of the 8th army corps, from Prince Charles of Bavaria:—

'A general advance by the Prussians across the Werra renders a junction of the 7th and 8th army corps impossible north of the Rhön. I shall therefore retreat on the parallel of Neustadt-Bischofsheim, and require the 8th army corps to preserve that line, in order as quickly as possible to effect a junction by Brückenau and Kissingen. No further plans can be laid down for the present. On the 7th I take up a position on the heights by Neustadt.'

This order imposed an almost impracticable task on the 8th army corps. In their then position they would have fully twice the distance to cover to that which lay between the 7th corps and the designated point of junction; the Bavarians also had a good road before them, and the range of mountains called the Rhön between them and the Prussians. The 8th army corps would have, on the contrary, to traverse an exceedingly difficult country, by bad cross-roads, and to debouch from them in the face of an enemy moving by the main routes, which all run in one direction. Under these circumstances, Prince July 6.

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Alexander of Hesse decided on a less hazardous movement, and directed his march on Schlüchtern.

On the evening of that day, the news of the total defeat of the Austrian main army at Königgrätz came to augment the perplexities of the commander-in-chief.

Intrusted with the command in the first instance for the protection of the seat of the Diet, and then ordered to co-operate with the Bavarians, for the relief of the Hanoverian army, Prince Alexander of Hesse, though placed under the command of Prince Charles of Bavaria, could not but see, when that movement had failed, that the execution of the orders he had received from the commander-in-chief exposed the 8th army corps to extreme danger.

The object of the Bavarian general-in-chief was evidently the protection of the national territory, and as that was to be pursued with little consideration for the risk to which Prince Alexander's corps would be exposed, and considering that the fortune of war had already been decidedly adverse to the chief member of the Confederation, the prince doubtless conceived that he best fulfilled the duty intrusted to him by covering the point originally confided to his guardianship, and again taking up a position to protect Frankfort.*

* Prince Alexander has been accused of disobedience; but Prince Charles's orders could have been obeyed only at heavy risk, and the Wurtemburg and Hesse-Darmstadt Governments approved of his movement.

Prince Alexander's dispositions were taken accordingly, and the 8th army corps once more took up ground in the vicinity of the free city; a position whence, if necessary, a junction with the 7th army corps could more easily be effected by way of Aschaffenburg.

Had the campaign in Bohemia been less disastrous to the Austrian arms, the main objects of the war might have been materially promoted by a junction between the 7th and 8th army corps. But when it became known that, after a great disaster, the Imperial Government was suing for peace, that Venetia was ceded to France, and that the intervention of the French Emperor, as mediator between the two chief belligerents, was asked and likely to be given, the situation was wholly altered, and the smaller States of Germany, which had adhered to the Diet, and to Austria, could not but feel that they were on the point of being at the mercy of Prussia, and that they had everything to fear from the vindictive feelings they had provoked.

The Baden division, under the command of Prince William of Baden, during this movement of the 8th corps of which they formed the second division, held the left wing, and were ordered to stand fast at Giessen and Wetzlar.

To the great surprise of the good people of Frankfort, this entire corps arrived in Frankfort on the night of the 6th, and early on the morning of the

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7th Prince William with his staff occupied the Hotel d'Angleterre, and the report spread through the town that trains were held in readiness for the purpose of conveying the division back to Baden.

The real grounds of this extraordinary proceeding have never been made public, but were attributed at the time to the known political bias of Prince William in favour of Prussia, and the effect which the news of the decisive victories in Bohemia produced on his mind, overcoming his sense of military duty and obedience.

July 7–9. The Prussian army of the Main meanwhile was concentrated, and advancing to attack the Bavarians with far greater speed than had entered into Prince Charles's calculation.

His troops, which had fought on the 4th and 5th,* were drawn southwards, towards Kissingen and Münnerstadt.

General Beyer's † Prussian division did not follow up the retrograde movement of the 8th army corps, but effected a junction with General v. Falckenstein at Brückenau.

The Bavarians meant to hold Kissingen and the line of the Saal, but did not expect to be attacked until the 11th, by which date considerable forces would have been assembled there.

* At Dermbach and Zella.

† Beyer's division marched first to Schlüchtern, then sharp to the left to Brückenau. The main body of the Prussians crossed the difficult passes of the Rhön mountain chain.

Römerschlag
Ober
Unter Riedenberg
BRÜCKENAU
Schwarzenberg
Salz Forst
Premich
Platzer Koppe
Schuldeck
Frauenroth
Wald
Unter
Ebersbach
Steinach
Ober Leichlersbach
Unter
Platz
Burkardroth
Frauenroth
Waldfenster
Schondra
Waldaschach
Bochlet
Lauter
Unter Geiersnest
Stralsbach
Grosswach
Hildebrach
Poppenroth
Clausherl
Rausch
Nüdlingen
R. Schondra
Adelsberg Wald
Schlimpfhof
Salin
Friedrichshalle
Albertshausen
Claus Wald
Winkels
Neuwirthshaus
Kaut
Ober Thulba
KISSINGEN
Auraer Wald
Garna
Bodenlaube
Wittershausen
Klost. Thulba
Reuterswiesen
Wartmannsroth
R. Thulba
Aura
Arnshausen
Ober Erthal
Ettingshausen
Unter Erthal
Elfenhausen
Wirmsthal
Euerdorf
Ramsthal
Orlenbach
Armberg
Salzthal
Dittlach
Mechtildshausen
R. Saale
HAMMELBURG
Langendorf
Westhem
Ebenhausen
Unter Aschenbach
Bodenberg
Ober Aschenbach
Fuchsstadt
Pfaffenhausen
BATTLES OF
KISSINGEN & HAMMELBURG.
Geographical Miles
English Miles
Prussians
Bavarians
Edwd Weller, lith.
London Longmans & Co.

As it happened, the whole Prussian force was within ten miles of that place on the 9th, while the Bavarians were spread over a space of fully twenty-five miles; and when the Prussians began the attack about 10 A.M. on the morning of the 10th, the Bavarians were in greatly inferior force, and, although holding favourable positions, were unable to maintain themselves at any one of the four different points upon the Saal,* on which the Prussian attacks were directed. They fought indeed obstinately at every position, and, at Kissingen in particular, tenaciously defended the passage of the river till their position was turned.† Later in the day they caused the Prussians severe loss by an evening attack, while the latter were taking up their bivouacs, after carrying the town and driving the Bavarians, as they imagined, into precipitate retreat. Many distinguished and valuable officers fell on either side; the Prussians reckoned 36 officers and 863 men as their total loss of killed, wounded, and prisoners, while they state that of the Bavarians in killed and wounded at 44 officers and 622 men, with 6 officers and 549 men taken prisoners. July 10.

The Bavarian commander at Kissingen, General

* Waldaschach, Friederichshall, Kissingen, and Hammelburg.

† The Prussians crossed the Saal by an imperfectly destroyed bridge, about three-quarters of an English mile below Kissingen, and so took the defenders of the town in flank. The combat lasted from 10 A.M. till after 2 P.M. The evening attack lasted till nearly 10 P.M.

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v. Zoller, was among the killed; and the Prussians, besides several staff-officers, lost Major Rohdewald, who commanded the fusileer battalion of Lippe, which had recently joined the Prussian forces.

The result of the combats of the day was that the whole Bavarian army began its retreat on the Main, and the major part of the troops reached Hasfurt,
July 11. Schweinfurt, and Wurzburg in the course of July 11.

Prince Charles took up a position near the latter city, on the left bank of the Main, and there awaited the expected attack of the Prussians.

Meanwhile, at the chief theatre of the war in Bohemia, the Prussian armies were marching on the Danube, and the conferences for settling terms of peace were about to be assembled. It seemed neither politic nor humane to cause further effusion of blood in Southern Germany, where, whatever the fortune of war might be, no great influence on the general course of events, which had already been decided in Austria itself, could be exercised; and M. de Bismarck sent General v. Falckenstein a telegram to this effect: 'Actual occupation of the country north of the Main is of political importance for impending negotiations on the basis of the *status quo*.'

Whilst, therefore, General v. Falckenstein gave orders to a portion of his troops to ascertain, as nearly as possible, the precise points on which the Bavarians had retreated, he directed the major part

of his army to move to their right, and march upon the Lower Main.

July 21. The Prussian governor of the Rhenish provinces, the Prince of Hohenzollern, had not been inactive on his side, and had marched troops into Nassau, with the view of making a diversion, which so far answered its purpose that the Nassau brigade was detached with the object of protecting Wiesbaden.

The Prussian commander, General v. Röder, having had no other object in view than to draw off the Confederate forces from the Main, withdrew his troops towards Coblenz, after an insignificant skirmish, in which the injury inflicted on either side amounted only to a few wounded men.

The troops under Prince Alexander of Hesse were occupied, in the neighbourhood of Frankfort, in making fieldworks, which were constructed on the north and north-east of the free city; but his Highness did not at the same time abandon the idea of effecting a junction with the Bavarians, and a brigade was in the first instance detached to Gelnhausen and Wirtheim, and subsequently the whole of the 1st division, with orders to push reconnaissances towards several points in advance. The total strength of the 8th army corps at this period was 49,147 men, organised in four divisions.

The Governments which furnished these forces required Prince Alexander of Hesse to continue to defend the line of the Main and Frankfort, and this

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demand was supported by the Diet; but the commander of the 8th corps still felt bound to obey the orders of his superior officer, and to secure the strategical points essential for that object. It is impossible, however, to avoid remarking the want of frank concert and of vigorous exertion which marked the operations of both the 7th and 8th corps from the commencement of the brief campaign in which they were engaged till its close. The imperfect, and, indeed, it may be said, unorganised condition of the several contingents forming the 8th corps offers sufficient explanation as to their tardiness in entering on the movements which should have contributed to disengage the Hanoverian army from their pursuers. The failure of the Bavarians to come to their aid is as much to be attributed to the hesitation and slowness with which they marched upon Eisenach, as to the fatality which arrested the Hanoverian attack upon that point on June 25, which has been recounted in its place. All three armies appear to have been singularly deficient in any well-organised system of obtaining intelligence —a material point, the neglect of which is the more surprising as the dispositions of the people in whose country the operations were carried on were decidedly less friendly to the Prussians than to their opponents.

July 13. The march of the Prussians on the Lower Main was only known with certainty to Prince Alexander of Hesse on July 13. On that day decided steps

were taken to oppose them, and, at the same time, to keep open the communications which might insure a junction with the Bavarians. It was clear that, the pursuit of the retreating forces of Prince Charles being abandoned, the storm of war was about to burst in another direction, and the Diet, finding that Frankfort could no longer be effectively defended, transferred its seat to Augsburg.

The Austrian brigade, under Lieut.-Field-Marshal Count Neipperg, was sent to Aschaffenburg, and other troops ordered to their support.

Colonel Schönfeld, aide-de-camp of Prince Alexander, had been sent on the 12th to Augsburg to receive Prince Charles's instructions; they were brought by him to Prince Alexander's head-quarters on the evening of the 13th, and directed the junction of the two army corps to be effected towards Uffenheim, by way of the Odenwald and the high road by Miltenberg and Tauberbischofsheim.

It will be at once apparent that the measures already taken by Prince Alexander of Hesse for a junction were entirely deranged by Prince Charles's order.

The intended movement on Uffenheim was at the very least a march of six days, and the advance of the Prussians not only made a change more perilous than perseverance in the movement already begun, but very effectively interfered with its execution.

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A detachment of Hessian troops, under General Perglas, had already advanced so far that they came in contact with the Prussians at Laufach, on the afternoon of the 13th, and attacking gallantly, but without much precaution or ascertaining the strength of their adversary, sustained a repulse which cost them dearly in killed and wounded. A regiment of their infantry had lain down their knapsacks for the attack. Their retreat was so hurried that the knapsacks were abandoned.

The Prussians on this occasion received the attack, and were mostly posted under cover. The deadly nature of the fire of the needle-gun under these circumstances becomes strikingly evident in the returns. The Prussians lost 1 officer and 57 men wounded, and only 5 men killed. The Hessians had 8 officers and 73 men killed, 24 officers and 360 men wounded. They retreated on Aschaffenburg without being pursued.*

* The Prussian troops receiving this attack were the advanced guard of General v. Goeben's division—Wrangel's brigade. They had marched more than fifty English miles since fighting at Kissingen within forty-eight hours, over a difficult country, and were too much fatigued to follow the retreating Hessians, who were terribly demoralised by their heavy loss.

## CHAPTER XXI.

COMBAT OF ASCHAFFENBURG—EIGHTH CORPS MANŒUVRES TO JOIN BAVARIANS AND ABANDONS FRANKFORT—OCCUPATION AND HARSH TREATMENT OF FRANKFORT BY PRUSSIANS.

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THE pushing forward of Hahn's Austrian brigade on Aschaffenburg, on the 13th, has already been mentioned. Their advance was made in time to receive and afford protection to their Hessian comrades, had the Prussians followed them; but their previous day's march and the great heat incapacitated General v. Goeben's troops from pursuing their advantage, and the roughly-handled Hessians had time to rest and re-form their decimated ranks. Count Neipperg, who commanded the Austrian division, arrived in the night, and the greater part of his division also reached the town during the night and early morning of the 14th. Learning from the troops on outpost duty that the Prussians were advancing in force, Count Neipperg took up a position in front of and in the suburbs of the town.* The 3rd division (Hessians), which should have occupied the left bank of the Main, by some extraordinary misunderstanding,

July 14.

* As the result showed, the position was injudiciously chosen. The Federal forces were divided by the river, and had the narrow streets of the town and the bridge in their rear.

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marched away in the direction of Seligenstadt, leaving only one battalion and one company of a rifle battalion in the railway-station, one battery of artillery and a covering squadron of cavalry in a good position at Damm; the commander, General Perglas, moreover, gave Count Neipperg no sort of intimation of his intention to withdraw his troops from the scene of action!

The Prussian attack commenced between 8 and 9 o'clock in the morning; and under cover of the fire of their superior artillery, and favoured by the nature of the ground, they soon began to show their superiority and to push back their opponents. Their chief attack was directed against the Austrian right wing, with the view of penetrating into the town, the narrow streets of which form so many defiles, and thus cutting off the retreat of the Austrians by the bridge. By 10 o'clock the Prussians had gained so much ground in this direction that one of their batteries, taking post on an elevated point of a garden close to the Main, opened fire on the bridge. General Hahn on the right, and Count Neipperg on the left, finding themselves getting worsted, drew off their troops in good order. The Austrian artillery retreated through the town, as did the squadron of Hesse-Cassel hussars attached to the division, but crossing the bridge under heavy fire suffered considerable loss. The combat in the streets and on the bridge itself was not obstinate, and of but brief

duration. The Prussians had the upper hand in all directions. A considerable number of the Federal troops and the Hessian battery of artillery, unable to reach the town, retreated along the railroad to Stockstadt, where they crossed the Main. Amongst these were two Austrian battalions, the 35th Rifles, and a battalion of the regiment Hess. A considerable part of the Austrian force engaged was composed of Italians. The large number of prisoners taken on this occasion by the Prussians, forces the conclusion that the resistance which the Prussians encountered was not of the most obstinate nature. It must have been impossible to keep these men in ignorance of the alliance contracted between the sovereigns of Italy and Prussia, or of the result of the campaign in Bohemia, and their surrendering themselves to those whom they looked on as friends of their own country can hardly be condemned. At all events the report was prevalent after the action, that two battalions of these troops, of the regiment Wernhardt, had scarcely fired a shot, and took the first opportunity of laying down their arms, and that their conduct accounted for the rapidity with which the action was decided. The extreme heat, and the fatigue of the Prussians, prevented pursuit, as on the preceding day; but the cuirassiers of General v. Falckenstein's camp-guard followed for a short distance, and brought in 175 prisoners. The total loss of the 8th corps was 3 officers and 223 men killed, 20

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officers and 464 men wounded; while their returns of missing—almost entirely taken prisoners—amounted to the very considerable number of 21 officers and 1,783 men. The Prussians lost only 5 officers and 22 men killed, 12 officers and 132 men wounded, and 9 men missing.

It has already been seen that on this day the 3rd division, instead of awaiting at all events within helpful distance of the action that was impending, marched out of reach. Part of the Baden division was also near enough to have shared in the action.

La Roche's brigade of that division had been sent on by railroad immediately after the last troops of the Austrian division, and had actually reached Babenhausen before 11 A.M. There these troops found the two reserve batteries of the Wurtemburg division, but though within an hour's march of the battle-field, and with the din of the fight in their ears, they came to a halt! On the other bank of the Main, Baumbach's brigade of Wurtemburgers was in march on Aschaffenburg from Gelnhausen. Half-way on their route they heard the not distant thunder of artillery, and, hurrying on to Dettingen, met with fugitives who told them how the day had gone. As the firing was not much longer heard, they halted and changed the direction of their march for Hanau. This brigade could have reached Aschaffenburg by midday.

The Baden division received the main body of

the troops retreating from Aschaffenburg. The Austrians were in a state of great disorganisation; many of them had lost their knapsacks and shakos, and threw themselves down by the road-side in thorough exhaustion from the heat. Had they been pursued, the disaster would have been far greater than it was, and the severe check which their division—the flower of the troops—under Prince Alexander, had met with, caused great discouragement.

By two in the afternoon the whole affair was ended. The Badeners sent a reconnaissance to the front, and found Stockstadt already strongly held by the Prussians.*

Parties were sent out to break-up the railroad, and Prince Alexander had in the first place to gain information as to the whereabouts of his scattered forces, and to provide for their concentration.

The Prussians are justly proud of their successful strategy, and of the advantages obtained in almost every encounter which they risked with the 7th and 8th army corps, subsequently to the battle of Langensalza. It may, however, be argued that these advantages were obtained quite as much through the faults of their opponents as their own superior tactical skill. Excepting at Aschaffenburg,

* It was said that Prince William of Baden was ordered by Prince Alexander of Hesse to attack Stockstadt, but declined, on account of the fatigue of his division.

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where the failure in defensive energy of the Italian troops on the Austrian right wing gave the Prussians an easy victory, there may have been no failure in mere fighting qualities on the part of any of the troops opposed to them; but general timidity, lamentable failures in the tactical arrangements, and a want of unity in the command, of which, be it said to their praise, the Prussian generals knew how to take advantage.

With a force numerically far inferior, the Prussians, in almost every engagement which was fought during this short campaign, contrived to bring larger numbers into action than were opposed to them, and, with the powerful aid of the needle-gun, to inflict much heavier losses than they suffered themselves.

As to the policy which led to the continuation of the contest, and to so much useless bloodshed for a period of three weeks after the great battle of Sadowa had virtually decided the war, it is difficult to pronounce otherwise on the conduct of Prussia than as harsh and needlessly oppressive. That the Prussians gladly seized the occasion of humiliating as well as of chastising those who opposed them was strikingly shown, as we shall presently see, in the manner in which they dealt with Frankfort. In thus acting they wholly left out of sight the golden maxim of so dealing with enemies that they may one day be your friends.

In Frankfort more especially, whether by superior

orders, or by the imperious manners, want of tact, and harsh dispositions of the general officers who were intrusted with their execution, they converted the well-disposed into enemies, and have left the whole population filled to this day with hostile recollections of injury and insult, which, should a change of fortune ever happen, will probably bear bitter fruit; and a generation at least must pass away before Prussia can count on the citizens of the ancient free state as loyal subjects.

Already, on the 14th, Prince Charles had notified to General v. Falckenstein that negotiations for an armistice were in progress between Austria and Prussia, and the Prussian general had intimated his readiness to enter on similar negotiations with his Royal Highness, but refused to let the 8th corps participate in the negotiation; whereupon Prince Charles declined further parley.

On the 16th the 8th corps was in full march through the Odenwald to form a junction with the Bavarians in Middle Franconia. The 7th corps had but a short distance to cover to reach the designated point of junction. The 8th on the contrary had from six to seven days' march before them, and owing to their check at Aschaffenburg, the Prussians, by having there secured the passage of the Main, were within striking distance of more than one point by which the march of the 8th corps must necessarily be directed, and their skilful commanders

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knew how to avail themselves of the opportunity to attack with advantage.

Meanwhile Wrangel's brigade moved from Aschaffenburg to Hanau, and learning that Frankfort was left undefended, pushed forward on the afternoon of the 16th to the free city, and General v. Falckenstein's head-quarters were there established on that day.* The authorities of the free city sent a deputation to the Prussian head-quarters, representing their defenceless state, and praying for merciful treatment.

The Prussians marched into the open town towards four o'clock in the afternoon, with all military precautions, as if in face of an enemy. The Frankfort battalion was drawn up with their band to give them welcome. The music struck up, and arms were presented; but the advanced guard of cuirassiers trotted past them with drawn sabres, or carbine in hand, without the slightest notice. Guns were planted at the commanding points, and the columns halted in the Zeil and on the Schiller's Platz. The Frankfort battalion was left for a couple of hours in disdainful non-intercourse, and then marched to their barracks.

The Prussians appear to have received orders at a late hour to lodge themselves as they pleased; for at 11 P.M. they broke into groups, and, knocking at the house-doors, forced an entrance where admission was

* General v. Falckenstein himself came by railroad from Hanau, and sent a telegram to the King of Prussia the same evening, saying, 'The territories north of the Main lie at your Majesty's feet.'

not readily afforded.* There was, however, some direction given to these apparently disorderly proceedings, and the houses of certain citizens presumed to be unfriendly to Prussia were occupied by larger numbers of their unbidden guests than any fair distribution of billets would have assigned to them.

Thus, to give only one instance, Herr Hermann Mumm had to lodge and feed, on this first night, 15 officers and 200 men!

On the morrow appeared an ordonnance signed by General v. Falckenstein, assuming absolute authority in the free city, and in all the districts occupied by Prussian troops.

The first exercise of this authority was to require the burgomasters Fellner and Müller to acquaint their fellow-citizens that, besides furnishing 300 horses and other contributions in kind, the pay of the Army of the Main for a year was imposed on the free State, and was to be paid within twenty-four hours. The sum exacted amounted to more than 7,000,000 florins, equal to about 600,000*l.* sterling.

The burgomasters went personally to remonstrate with General v. Falckenstein, and the accounts given of the interview show the General in no favourable light.

He told the two senators, as is averred, that he used the rights of conquest, and that, if his demands were not promptly complied with, the town should be given up to pillage.

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Haughtily putting aside their pleas for indulgence on the score of non-resistance, and on the ground that the free city was under the protection of international law, the General is said to have used the expression, that he would be the Alba of Frankfort!

The editor of the well-known French journal published in Frankfort, 'Le Journal de Francfort,' Counsellor Fischer, received a peremptory mandate to appear before the Prussian commander-in-chief. The details of what passed in the interview are imperfectly known, but it was said the General accused him of systematic opposition to Prussian interests, and required from him some sort of retractation of principles, which that gentleman regarded as incompatible with his honour. On his refusal, General v. Falckenstein overwhelmed the unfortunate man with such a torrent of menace and invective that, being of an impressionable nature and sanguine constitution, he was struck with apoplexy, and died on the spot.

The news of this sad event spread rapidly through the city, and created a profound sensation; and this strange and sudden death of so well-known a citizen was in the first moments bruited abroad as being a political assassination.

On the 18th, an order of the general appeared suppressing the 'Journal de Francfort' and four other newspapers published in the city.

The contribution not coming in as speedily as was

required, Senators Spelz and Bernus were put in arrest and sent under escort to Cologne. The fear inspired by these acts of severity had its effect, and the whole sum demanded was advanced by the bank and handed over to the Prussian authorities on the morning of the 19th. July 19.

On the same day, the Frankfort battalion was dissolved, and the men dismissed, with gratuities apportioned to their length of service in the corps.* This small body of troops, composed wholly of volunteers, had always distinguished itself by good discipline and orderly conduct. It was under the command of Colonel Böing. The Prussia commanders probably considered both officers and men to be tainted with the anti-Prussian spirit which they ascribed to the inhabitants of Frankfort in general, and took immediate occasion to get rid of a corps which they imagined to be ill-affected. A second requisition of horses was made on the 20th, and this time of 700 head.

Amongst those selected were the carriage-horses of a well-known physician, noted as a Liberal, and a Prussian partizan.

The doctor remonstrated, and said that, having more than one hundred patients, they must needs be sufferers if he was deprived of his equipage. The only reply he obtained was in the shape of ironical

* Paid by the Frankfort Government.

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felicitations on his good practice; but the service, he was told, admitted no exceptions.

Not only were horses, adapted for any branch of military service, put in requisition, but any animal that could be turned to account in other ways was unscrupulously taken from the citizens. Thus a pair of thoroughbred English ponies under fourteen hands, were pitched on as a desirable possession by some military amateur. They were the property of Baron Charles de Rothschild, habitually driven by the ladies of his family, and when the Baron offered double their value if allowed to retain them, he received an exceedingly curt refusal, but subsequently learnt that the ponies had found their way to Berlin, *not having been found fit for military use.*

Being deprived of their equipages, the Frankfort ladies made their expeditions in hackney carriages; but on more than one occasion the gallant Prussian officers took possession of these vehicles, when called by ladies, leaving them to find their way on foot.

The rifle clubs were disarmed; the gymnastic clubs, and most of the popular associations of the city, and of Sachsenhausen, dissolved.

July 20. On the 20th General v. Falckenstein was replaced in the command at Frankfort, by General v. Manteuffel, and the rigours of his predecessor were, if possible, exceeded by this superior officer.

Enormous contributions in kind were ordered for

the supply of the army,* and the burgomaster Fellner received a second pecuniary requisition, amounting, this time, to the round sum of 25,000,000 florins = 2,100,000*l.* sterling, to be paid within twenty-four hours.

To this inordinate demand, the burgomasters, after consultation with their chief fellow-citizens, determined on opposing passive resistance. The head of the great Israelitish banking house of de Rothschild, Baron Charles, with several other notables of the city, had an interview with General Manteuffel, for the purpose of remonstrance against so extravagant an imposition, which, they pledged their word, exceeded all the available resources of the entire population, if each was taxed according to his means.

General v. Manteuffel refused to abate an iota of his requisition, threatened pillage and bombardment, and told the deputation that, unless payment of one moiety of the sum required was made within three days, and of the whole amount within six, the imposition should be doubled!

The departure of the members of the Diet from Frankfort to Augsburg on July 14 has already been noticed, and the Ministers of the several States accredited to the Confederation had received the

* Besides their ordinary meals, each soldier was to receive one bottle of wine and eight cigars per day! A tradesman, who had fourteen privates and two under-officers quartered on him, told me that the *privates* volunteered to renounce half a bottle of wine, and to be content with four cigars per diem.

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orders of their respective Governments to follow the Assembly to which they were accredited, and all of them had left Frankfort. The families, however, of the foreign envoys remained there, as well as the secretaries of legation of the foreign missions. The threats of pillage and bombardment could not be indifferent to these gentlemen; for though in pillage, organised as it must have been in a town not taken by assault, but of which the intending plunderers were in peaceful possession, discipline might have so far prevailed as to cause respect to be paid to the national flag of each nation displayed at the legations, no special immunity could be promised to these residences from Prussian bombs.

The secretaries of legation of Russia, France, Great Britain, Spain, and Belgium therefore met, and drew up a collective note to the military commandant of the city, Colonel Kortzfleisch.

This document, with a trenchant irony which no obtuseness could prevent those to whom it was addressed from appreciating, treated the reported threats of pillage and bombardment as misapprehension, but begged the Colonel, as the rumour was prevalent, to aid them in calming the apprehensions of their countrymen resident in the city, by enabling them to contradict such unfounded rumours, authoritatively.

The Colonel not vouchsafing a reply, the five gentlemen who had signed the note sought an inter-

view with him, and were not a little astonished at hearing from this superior officer's own lips, that he did not regard the menaces made as empty or absurd, and that unless the contribution was paid in the time prescribed, they might very well be executed.

At this crisis General v. Manteuffel was temporarily replaced by General v. Röder, and the secretaries of legation, alarmed at the tone taken by Colonel Kortzfleisch, addressed themselves to the General, begging him to give them some means of reassuring their countrymen, which they had been unable to extract from the answer they had received from Colonel Kortzfleisch. General v. Röder made no immediate written answer, whereupon these gentlemen, beginning to share the general alarm, drew up a telegram for their respective ministers, briefly recounting what had passed, and asking for instructions. This telegram having to pass through the hands of the Prussian authorities was most uncourteously detained, without any notification to that effect to the senders, and it was not till late on the 23rd that General v. Röder favoured the secretaries with a reply, in which he said that, though he had no authority to give an official reply to their collective note of the 21st and 22nd, or indeed to enter into any correspondence with them, he could inform them that their countrymen had nothing to fear from the measures he might eventually have to adopt in regard to the city of Frankfort.

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Let it be said to the credit of the wives of the several ministers left in Frankfort, that, although pressed by many to leave the city, they one and all decided on remaining in their residences at all hazards. They, at least, refused to believe that the Prussians were quite as barbarous as they were at such infinite pains to make themselves out to be; and the continued stay of these ladies, and their families, in this hardly-dealt-with city, had a most salutary and reassuring effect.

Some of the bankers, terrified at the threats of pillage, informed their clients that they could no longer be responsible for the moneys and valuable effects deposited with them; and the legations of France and England, in particular, at the earnest solicitation of their possessors, became the depositories of property to a very large amount.

July 23. It was on July 23 that the system of menace adopted by the Prussians reached its acmé as far as outward appearances went. Fresh troops, especially artillery, were brought into Frankfort, and guns were actually planted on the heights commanding the city, and on the left bank of the Main, as if in readiness for the coming bombardment. The quartering of soldiers on the already cruelly overburthened householders was increased. General v. Röder gave out that, before coming to the *ultima ratio* of bombardment, he would close the post, the hotels, and the magazines of all kinds of goods, and he further

threatened to put a military cordon round the city, forbidding not only the egress or ingress of its inhabitants, but the importation of all supplies of provisions, excepting those required for his troops. In short, as far as menace and numberless acts of oppression and insult to the terror-stricken inhabitants could be pushed, the Prussian commanders did their best, but in vain, to extort from them the heavy sum which General Manteuffel had thought proper to fix as the fine to be imposed on the ancient seat of the Diet and the crowning-place of the Emperors of the Germanic Empire — as a punishment for the presumed anti-Prussian sentiments of its citizens.

It may appear trivial to dwell on details, which in truth had no appreciable effect on the great drama still being enacted on the battle-field; but the exposure cannot but have its moral use, by showing how, in the intoxication of triumph, some among the superior military officers of a great and highly civilised nation proved devoid of the ordinary chivalrous feeling of the victor to the vanquished (if so the unresisting Frankfurters can be fairly styled), forgot the pleadings of humanity, and threatened with the extremest rigours of war the inhabitants of a city of their own race and nation; not so much, let it be hoped, with the sordid motive of plundering them of their wealth, which was the alleged cause of all this severity, as of exercising Prussian vengeance for the crime of not loving that branch of the nation

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whose sons were now showing how little they knew the way of inspiring any sentiments but those of hatred and aversion.

The French, in their invasions of Germany, had many times occupied and held Frankfort at their mercy; but now the terrified inhabitants drew comparisons between their actual treatment by the Prussians and that which they had experienced at the hands of the Republican and Imperial commanders of France, who at various epochs had held military possession of the city, and they exclaimed in bitterness of spirit, 'Rather French than Prussian.'

Perhaps the most tragical incident of this melancholy epoch was the suicide of the first Burgomaster, Dr. Fellner, a man greatly beloved for his benevolent and genial character; and who was driven to this sad extremity by General v. Röder's requiring to be furnished with a list of those citizens whose fortunes were the most considerable. This demand was the last drop in this functionary's cup of bitterness; an exigency with which, as a man of honourable principles, but of a nature too impressionable to struggle with the evil days in which his destiny had placed him in a post of high responsibility, he found it impossible to comply. Dr. Fellner hung himself, choosing death to that which appeared to him the dishonourable act of signalling the names of his fellow-citizens to Prussian rapacity.

Meanwhile, the cry of the despairing inhabitants of

the ancient free city had, by friendly intervention, reached the ears of the Queen of Prussia, and had been laid before Her Majesty in such wise that Her Majesty's compassionate feelings led her to solicit the King to relieve the oppressed little State from the crushing exaction imposed upon it by his generals.

The Queen's application was made from Berlin by telegraph, and the King without hesitation replied by signifying that, through the Queen's intercession, the contribution of 25,000,000 florins, imposed on the city of Frankfort by General v. Manteuffel, was remitted.

The painful sentiments occasioned by the death of the first Burgomaster prevented, for the moment, the full effect of the relief given by the King's accession to the Queen's demand being felt. The inordinate quartering of troops was not lightened, and stupor and dread of what was to come still prevailed.

Apprehensive of the effects of popular feeling, the Prussian authorities caused the funeral obsequies of Dr. Fellner to be celebrated at daybreak on the 26th. July 26.

Here may be closed the register of the sufferings of Frankfort under Prussian occupation. In money and in kind upwards of 14,000,000 florins=1,170,000*l.* had been extracted from the wealth of the State, and from the hard-earned means of her burghers. That the order *to punish* Frankfort had gone forth from the highest quarter is not doubtful. The execution

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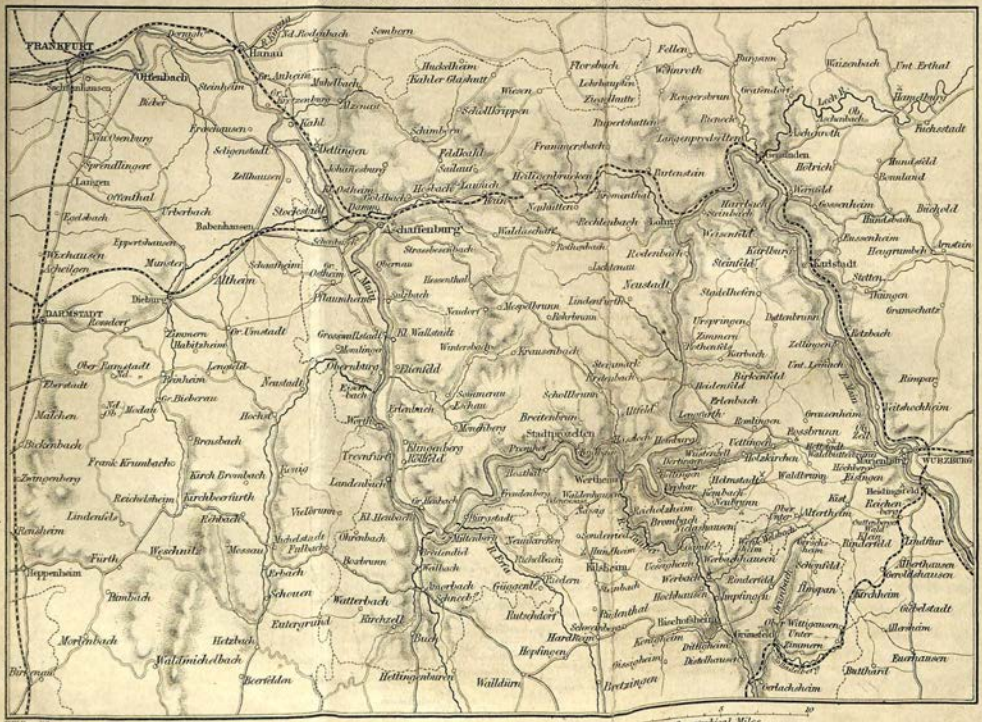
of the precept was, however, intrusted to hands that knew not how to temper judgment with mercy, but whose rigour and harshness have left a stain on the national reputation not easily to be effaced, have alienated friends, and stamped impressions of cruel material wrong and gratuitous insult, never to be forgotten and not easily forgiven.

It is to be presumed that the notion of annexing Frankfort was an afterthought, or the able Chief of the Cabinet of Prussia would never have devised the ruin of a population which was to be incorporated in the kingdom. Berlin may have been jealous of her financial prosperity, but that feeling could scarcely have so worked upon the statesman who guided the counsels of his country as that he should compass the destruction of a property which he was about to appropriate. But the Prussians remembered that for centuries the Emperors of Germany had been crowned at Frankfort; that while the quaint old fountain in the Römer Platz ran wine, and the shouts of the burghers rang out in echo to the cathedral bells, high festival was held in the Kaiser Saal, and it was desirable that the memory of these things should be wiped out. In this sense their conduct is explicable, although it was a mistake. By a little tact, an infinitesimal display of kindly feeling, Prussia might have gained 70,000 good subjects; by her harshness and oppression she reduced under her domination just so many malcontents.

# COMBATS ON THE MAIN, AND IN THE ODENWALD.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Bieber
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Kl. Rodenbach
Sembern
Hochstadt
Dettingen
Alzenau
Kahl
Erlenbach
Schimborn
Schaffenburg
Aschaffenburg
Stockstadt
Obernau
Strassbessenbach
Rothenbach
Roedenbach
Waldaschaff
Rechtenbach
Aschaf
Weissenkirchen
Hessenthal
Neustadt
Lindenfels
Steinbach
Haibach
Laufach
Heimbuchenthal
Frohnhofen
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Schollbrunn
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Triefenstein
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Stadelhofen
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Allersheim
Euerhausen
Burkhardt
DARMSTADT
Roszdorf
Zimmern
Habitzheim
Gr. Umstadt
Groszumstadt
Kl. Wallstadt
Mosslingen
Winterkasten
Krausenbach
Ober Ramstadt
Traisa
Eschollbrücken
Pfungstadt
Eberstadt
Gr. Bieberau
Nieder Ramstadt
Ober Ramstadt
Modau
Malchen
Hahn
Hochst
Bickenbach
Brandbach
Frank. Krumbach
Zwingenberg
Kirch Brombach
Reichelsheim
Kirchbeerfurth
Lindenfels
Rimhein
Eschbach
Weschnitz
Messau
Fürth
Tepperheim
Erbach
Bambach
Schönen
Watterbach
Eutergrund
Kirchzell
Mörlenbach
Hetzbach
Waldmichelbach
Beerfelden
Hettingenbaurer
Walldürn
Buch
Hardheim
Hepfingen
Bretzingen
Berolzheim
Buttharl
Euerhausen
Allersheim
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Uffenheim
Mergentheim
Bischofsheim
Tauberbischofsheim
Wertheim
Miltenberg
Amorbach
Obernburg
Aschaffenburg
Seligenstadt
Hanau
Frankfurt
Darmstadt
Erbach
Michelstadt
Beerfelden
Walldürn
Buchen
Adelsheim
Boxberg
Lauda
Tauberbischofsheim
Bischofsheim
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Zimmern
Retzbach
Karbach
Zellingen
Urt. Lengfurt
Birkenfeld
Heidenfeld
Erlenbach
Gravenhaun
Rimpar
Wittbrechtshm

## CHAPTER XXII.

COMBATS IN THE ODENWALD—MANŒUVRES.



From the 17th to the 20th of July, the Prussian commanders were wholly occupied in taking possession of and organising as wide an extent of country north of the Main as their means permitted, and held Frankfort, Hanau, and Aschaffenburg, in force.

General v. Falckenstein arranged the military government not only in Frankfort but in Nassau and the province of Upper Hesse. He also took precautions for re-establishing the damaged railways in his rear, and acted in close concert with the force under the Prince of Hohenzollern operating from the Rhine fortresses, which force was added to his command. The contingents of some of the smaller States under Prussian influence also joined the army of the Main. A battalion composed of the troops of Schwarzburg, Rudolstadt, and Waldeck, was aggregated to the force under the Prince of Hohenzollern; and an entire brigade of Oldenburg and Hanse Towns' troops, commanded by General Welzien, besides several newly-formed fourth battalions of Prussian regiments, joined their respective corps. The Bavarians stood inactive at Wurzburg.

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Prince Alexander's corps meanwhile was seemingly using every effort for junction with the Bavarians, and his Highness intimated to Prince Charles the desirableness of his at least sending his reserve cavalry from the vicinity of Wurzburg towards the Tauber.

July 20. It was not till July 20 that the advanced guard of the 8th army corps reached the Tauber. Engaged in marches and countermarches, and in two disastrous combats, since the 12th of the month, the whole of the 8th corps had great need of some repose.

On the 20th, Prince Charles, with his staff, had a conference with Prince Alexander at Tauberbischofsheim, in which the details of operations for completing the junction of the two corps under their respective orders were discussed. In consequence of the great fatigue which the whole of Prince Alexander's corps had undergone, and the actual position of the 7th corps, it was found impracticable to begin a combined movement sooner than the 24th; but as the 8th corps had already, and without being attacked, got over that most perilous portion of their march in which they had exposed their flank to the heads of the Prussian columns, in case they had moved against them from Aschaffenburg, there was reasonable ground for expecting that the most dangerous part of the operation was

ended, and that what remained to be done would be effected without hindrance from the enemy.

Had the Bavarians met the 8th corps half-way, the junction would probably have been effected; but Prince Charles seems to have had the fixed idea of keeping well within his own territory, and that the 8th corps must needs come to him. Thus, instead of moving his own troops towards Miltenberg and Wertheim, by which means the junction might have been completed on the 21st, he obstinately clung to the line of country between Wertheim and Wurzburg. It would appear to have been intended, from the point of junction indicated, that the two corps should act on the Prussian line of occupation of the Main, by marching on Aschaffenburg.

Two days had been lost in taking a decision, and two more were required for maturing the preparations for the intended combined offensive movement.

The Prussians, on their side, without perhaps penetrating the plans of their opponents, had taken care, by following with cavalry patrols, to assure themselves of the movement of the 8th corps on Miltenberg, and knew that the main body of the Bavarian army was at Wurzburg.

General v. Falckenstein had been summoned to another field of activity in Bohemia, and the commandership-in-chief was intrusted to General

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v. Manteuffel, with General v. Flies as second in command.

General v. Manteuffel reached Frankfort on the 20th. His attention was not solely absorbed by the care of extracting the heavy war contribution which he imposed on that city, but he made immediate preparations for attacking the troops which still kept the field in hostility to Prussia.

The Confederates, as has already been seen, were superior to the Prussians in force, and still reckoned some 90,000 men with 286 guns, whilst the Prussian commander had not many more than 50,000 men with 121 guns at his disposition. His troops, however, were confident in themselves, and flushed with the success that had attended their arms in every encounter they had hitherto had with their opponents.

While Prince Charles and Prince Alexander of Hesse were taking counsel, General v. Manteuffel was acting vigorously, and, from the two sides of Darmstadt and Aschaffenburg, closing on the 8th corps. Whilst General v. Goeben marched from Darmstadt and Dieburg, reaching König on the 22nd, General v. Flies halted at Laudenbach, and General v. Beyer at Wallstadt. The last-named general sent a detachment to reconnoitre the Bavarians, whom they met with near Esselbach and found to be in force at Marktheidenfeld. Rejoining

their division at Miltenberg, this detachment drew the attention of the Bavarians in that direction.

It may be mentioned that on the 21st the King of Wurtemburg visited the army, and inspected his own troops in the valley of the Tauber. Prince Alexander of Hesse had on the same day conferred with Prince Charles at Wurzburg, and the idea of attacking Aschaffenburg was much contested.

An advance on Frankfort through the Odenwald, instead of the project agreed upon the preceding day, was put forward; but the attack on Aschaffenburg was finally determined on, and the march route laid down.

All these schemes, however, as will presently be seen, were put to nought by the celerity and decision of the Prussian movements.

Their force had, in three days' march, covered the ground which it had taken the troops of the 8th corps just double that time to traverse, and the advanced guard found itself on the 23rd in the face of Prince William of Baden's division, of which corps Laroche's brigade held the village of Hundheim. There was some slight skirmishing before the Prussians seriously attacked.

The troops of the 8th corps were to have had a day of rest, but had already been put on the *qui vive* by reports of the Prussian advance, which had reached them on the preceding day, and the first,

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second, and third divisions had been so disposed as to lend each other mutual support.

In this part of the Odenwald, the formation of the country is peculiar. The valleys are deeply cut between lofty hills, most of which, where not cultivated on account of their steep acclivity or unfavourable exposure, are covered with dense wood. The streams run, by a double watershed, either to the Neckar, or the river Main. The high roads follow the valleys, and the cross roads are all but impracticable as military routes, from the steepness of the hills and their being scarcely used for any purpose but the transport of wood or manure in that part of the district which was the scene of action. The villages and small towns stand wholly in the valleys, and the inhabitants, though not numerous, seem, by the character of their dwellings and surroundings, to be in a condition of moderate prosperity. In such towns as Miltenberg, Amorbach, and Mergentheim, there is some manufacturing as well as agricultural industry, and almost everywhere attention is given to the growth of the vine.*

Towards the two first-named towns, the spaces between the deep valleys extend, on the summits of the hills, into wide and tolerably fertile table-lands, cultivated to the extreme verge of the ravine-like declivities, between which the Tauber and other streams have their course.

* The light white wine of the Tauber district, especially, has considerable reputation.

In view of the operations about to be begun for junction with the Bavarians, it was a capital object for the 8th corps to avoid partial engagements; but the Prussians found means of forcing them on their adversaries, and generally in advantageous conditions for themselves, inflicting much heavier losses than they suffered, and giving an impression of superiority in arms which doubtless stood them in good stead, in enabling them to impose their own terms when the period of negotiation arrived.

The Badeners, then under Prince William,* were attacked by the Coburg-Gotha battalion, commanded by Colonel Fabeck, of Flies's division, with two guns, and in the first instance retreated. They retired, however, on strong supports, and the Prussians in their turn drew off from the combat. They had only five killed and fifteen wounded, the Badeners had three officers and twelve men killed, three officers and fifty-three men wounded, and twenty-three missing. July 23.

Had the Prussians advanced, they would speedily have betrayed their weakness. Had the troops of the 8th corps acted on the offensive when Colonel Fabeck's men discontinued their attack, they too would have discovered how small a force General Flies had in hand; but the object of one side seemed to be to avoid any engagement, and the Prussians

* This skirmish took place near Wertheim, between the villages of Hundheim and Steinbach. Flies's brigade held the entire division of Prince William of Baden in check from two in the afternoon till evening!

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acted prudently in not pushing forward against superior numbers.

The intended march route for junction with the 7th corps could, however, no longer be pursued. Prince Charles had sent notice that the first division of his army was moving by échelons from Remmlingen upon Wertheim, and that his brigade of cuirassiers would be advanced to Steinbach and Klein Rinderfeld.

Prince Alexander notified his Royal Highness, that the main body of the 7th corps could only reach the latter point on the 24th, in case they passed the Tauber without being attacked, and also in case the flank march by Marktheidenfeld was still practicable.

On the evening of the 23rd the three Prussian divisions of Generals Flies, Beyer,. and Goeben occupied respectively Neukirchen, Miltenberg, and Amorbach. The advanced guard of the last-named division, two squadrons of the 8th Hussars, was entering Waldurn, when they encountered the Baden life dragoons, and had a smart skirmish in the little town itself, and on the high road, in which the Badeners lost two men killed, and an officer and some thirty men taken prisoners. The Prussians had only a few wounded.

Although, then, the first division of the 7th corps was moving on Wertheim, the main body of the Bavarians was already in the Spessart, on the left

bank of the Main, advancing by the line of march agreed upon before the Prussians made their appearance on the 23rd. The 8th corps therefore had the three Prussian divisions in their front and flank, and while the Prussians were concentrated and well in hand, their opponents were scattered over an expanse nearly forty English miles in extent.

It was no longer possible to throw bridges over the Main at Wertheim and Fechenheim, as had been projected, and Prince Alexander, in the certainty of being attacked in force on the 24th, had at once to provide for the defensive. This was done as far as possible, reckoning on the support that might be given by the Bavarian division and the cuirassiers of their armies' reserve, presumed to have been sent to Gross-Rinderfeld.

The first division of the 8th corps (Wurtemburg), on the morning of July 24, held the Wurzburg road, and the heights of the right bank of the Tauber, occupying Impfingen and Bischofsheim. July 24.

The 3rd division (Hessian), which had held Schweinsberg, and the heights towards Külsheim, were drawn back to the other bank of the Tauber, to form the reserve, and to hold communication with the 1st division.

The 2nd division (Baden) moved from Külsheim to Hochhausen and Werbach, occupying the space between the latter village and Brunnthal.

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The reserve cavalry was to march on the table-land, to cover this movement, to retire through Bischofsheim, and take position by Gerchseim and Ober- and Unter-Altertheim.

The 4th division (Austrian and Nassau) stood between Paimar and Günfeldshausen, the reserve artillery assembled at Schönfeld and Ilmsplan, while the pontoon train and reserve ammunition were ordered to take post at Krensheim.

In these positions, the commander of the 8th corps entertained the expectation of being able to hold his ground, and, with the aid of the first Bavarian division, to await the moment of more complete junction for assuming the offensive.

The position occupied was extensive, about seven English miles in length, and the reserve cavalry and artillery stood nearly ten miles to the rear, with narrow roads and difficult ravine-filled country to traverse, before they could arrive to the support of the front line, if attacked.

July 24. The line of battle was evidently calculated more for a fighting retreat upon Wurzburg than for taking the offensive.

The Prussians expected to have encountered opposition before reaching the Tauber, but not meeting the enemy, Beyer's and Goeben's divisions halted at Hardheim and Wolferstetten. Flies' division on the extreme left pushed forward, and finding the passage of the Tauber free, crossed the stream. A further

advance would have placed them between the 8th corps and the Bavarians. This, however, would have risked exposure of their right flank, and they did not push forward.

Getting intelligence that Bischofsheim was but weakly occupied, General v. Goeben, instead of encamping, as he had at first intended, decided on making an effort to gain possession of that important point.

Bischofsheim is a town of 3,000 inhabitants, built in the narrow valley of the Tauber, and was formerly fortified, but the ancient walls and ditch have been converted into gardens and public walks. The railway from Heidelberg to Wurzburg passes by the town on an embankment some 30 feet in height, and the Tauber, the bed of which has been artificially corrected and embanked, is crossed by a wooden bridge on piles of masonry about 75 yards long. The stream is barely 50 feet broad, and unless in time of flood, fordable everywhere, but on account of its high rough-stone-faced banks, is not easily traversed, even by infantry. The valley is about 400 yards in its mean breadth. The very steep hills on either side rise fully 300 feet, being exceedingly abrupt on the left bank, but rather less so on the right, where they are covered with vineyards, and are cut in twain on that side by a brook called the Brehmback.

The town therefore forms a defensible *tête-de-pont*, and the troops who hold it, protected by artil-

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lery, advantageously posted on the left bank of the Tauber, and being well covered behind the railroad embankment, and by the position of the buildings and enclosures on that side of the stream, have a remarkably strong position.

The Wurtemburgers held the town, the railway embankment, the walled burying-ground, and the western portion of the public walks, but with only two battalions of the 2nd regiment, two companies being posted in reserve on the bridge.

Prince Alexander's arrangements imply that he thought the Prussians superior or equal in force, and that, in case they gained the high ground on the right bank, his hold of the town would be difficult. The real defence, therefore, was intended to be made from the left bank, where those who held it were well sheltered, and could in their turn cover the town, the bridge, and its approaches on both sides with their fire.

Towards 2 P.M. the Prussian attack commenced. Wrangel's brigade marched upon the town, while his artillery, posted on the hill above it, opened fire. The Wurtemburgers did not offer much resistance in the town, retreating across the bridge, and the two battalions divided after passing it, marching to their right and left.

The Prussians speedily took possession of the houses, and of all cover to be found on the right bank, and opened a heavy fire on their opponents,

who, while mounting the opposite heights, were much exposed both to the needle-gun of the infantry and to artillery, and sustained considerable loss.

Unfortunately for the Wurtemburgers also, a convoy of provisions was ascending the hollow way, through which runs the Wurzburg road, and being exposed to fire, several horses in the teams were killed and wounded. The peasant drivers took to flight, and the whole convoy remained, blocking up the road, during the entire duration of the combat, creating much confusion, and impeding the movements of the defenders.

After the fight so many horses were found killed or disabled, that the waggons were left in the road, and became the prey of the Prussians.

Two guns and a squadron of Wurtemburg dragoons, which had remained on the right bank, cleared this obstacle with the greatest difficulty, and the guns took post on the right, together with a battalion of horse artillery.

The Wurtemburg troops were now in their turn pushed forward to attack, and, led by General Baumbach, several battalions of infantry and two battalions of Jägers made an attempt to drive the Prussians from the town. These troops advanced to the banks of the stream, and to the bridge; but the heavy fire of the Prussians, from the houses and other sheltering cover, drove them back, with serious loss both of officers and men. Three times these

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soldiers tried gallantly to force the deadly passage, but in vain; and after the last repulse, some of the Prussians crossed the bridge, and established themselves in the gardens and enclosures on the left bank of the Tauber.

The artillery fire from the heights, however, prevented the Prussians from advancing further; and the Wurtemburg gunners succeeded in silencing for a time the fire of their enemies' artillery.

At Impfingen also an artillery duel was going on; but at that point the Prussians were in superiority, and the Wurtemburg battery, opposed to two of their opponents, had to be withdrawn.

The repeated attacks made by the Wurtemburgers after they had in the first instance given up the defence of Bischofsheim, in the belief that they were attacked by superior numbers, were doubtless provoked by discovering the weakness of the opposing force to which they had yielded the ground.

By good disposition of their men under cover, with their infantry mostly posted in the houses, only one company being drawn up four deep near the bridge, the Prussian officers, Lieut.-Colonel Böcking and Colonel Stolz, repulsed every attack, and the losses of the Wurtemburgers were severe. The superiority of the needle-gun in defensive position asserted itself in a remarkable manner, and the Prussians themselves recount, as particularly effective, the volley-firing of the company near the bridge (the two front

ranks kneeling) being, as they remark, in their official account of this combat, 'as was done at *Podol.*'

Towards half-past 4 P.M. the single Prussian battery engaged, having one gun dismounted, retired before the fire of 18 opposing pieces, and the Wurtemburg batteries advancing, opened fire on the Prussians in the town, from a range of 1,000 yards.

The town soon took fire in several places, and the Prussians had great difficulty in moving their own and their enemies' wounded from the burning houses into places of safety.

Prince Alexander had ordered up reinforcements from the reserve artillery. A battery of the Baden division was also closing up, and towards 5 P.M. the 4th division was directed to renew the attack on the bridge, but their advance was soon checked by the Prussian artillery once more in position.

A little later, as no firing was heard in the direction of Werbach, Prince Alexander sent to ascertain the cause, and to learn how the Baden division fared, as columns of the enemy had been seen moving towards their position.

The officers sent returned with the astounding intelligence that the position was deserted, and the Baden troops nowhere visible.

The two batteries of the 4th division had meanwhile taken post with the Wurtemburg artillery, and the fire on the town and bridge was uninterruptedly kept up. The Prussians, who had crossed the

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stream, ran short of ammunition, and as no soul could cross the bridge and live, fresh cartridges had to be conveyed to them by men wading through the stream.

The Prussians were too weak to attempt to carry the heights, and their ability to hold the ground they had gained was becoming at each instant more and more doubtful.

In this critical moment Prince Alexander finding his right wing uncovered by the disappearance of the Baden division, and that the Bavarians gave no sign of coming to his support, issued orders to suspend the fight, having reason to be apprehensive both for his flank and rear, on finding that nothing could be heard of the troops under the orders of Prince William of Baden.

This division had taken up the ground they were directed to occupy, towards midday, but did not avail themselves of the advantages of localities, as they might have done, to make the best dispositions for defence.

Their artillery especially, instead of being on the high ground, was posted in a hollow, commanded from the opposite heights.

Towards 2 P.M., Welzien's Oldenburg brigade arrived on the heights above Hochhausen, a village on the right bank of the Tauber, which was occupied by their opponents. As the Oldenburg artillery took position, they were fired on by a Wurtemburg battery from Impfingen; but the

Oldenburg guns, better posted, soon forced the Wurtemburgers to draw off, and were then able to turn their fire on the Baden infantry, whose columns, though at nearly 3,000 yards distance, suffered some loss. The two Baden batteries unlimbered in, and close to, the burying-ground of Werbach; but the fire of the Oldenburg batteries, one of which consisted of 12-pounder guns, very shortly drove them from their ground, leaving a dismounted gun behind them.

The Oldenburg infantry at the same time attacked Hochhausen, and, after brief resistance, drove the Badeners across the Tauber. General Welzien immediately proceeded to attack Werbach, in three columns. The cannonade had been heard by the Prussian troops of Berger's division, and, hastening their march, a battalion of that corps, viz., the 70th Fusileers, reached the ground in time to share in the attack on Werbach.

Vigorously pushed, the Prussian attack succeeded at all points. The Badeners offered but slight resistance, and retreated with the loss of a few prisoners and the dismounted gun. The Wurtemburg artillery covered their retreat to the best of their power, and their shells set fire to the village of Hochhausen; but the battery was soon again forced to retire, under the superior fire of their enemy.

The Prussian and Oldenburg guns then began to cannonade the Wurtemburg infantry, which had

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not been engaged, near Impfingen, and also fired —though with little effect, on account of the distance, upon the Wurtemburg guns still in action between Bischofsheim and Impfingen.

The sudden cessation of the combat at Werbach seemed inexplicable to the Wurtemburgers; the more so that there was no indication of the enemy attacking them in flank, otherwise than by a remote cannonade; nor could it be seen, from the position they held, whether the Prussians had advanced beyond the Tauber.

They did not in fact pursue the Badeners, but, content with having secured the passage of the Tauber, took up their camping-ground on the positions from which their adversaries had retired.

Now the Baden division was to have held the right wing of Prince Alexander's position, and was moreover so posted as to be the nearest division of the 8th corps to the Bavarians, believed to be standing at Neubrunn.

The maintenance of the position, which was intrusted to Prince William of Baden, was of vital importance; but by a faulty disposition of the means at his disposal, and weak resistance when attacked, he compromised the safety of the whole army, and imperilled the much desired junction with the 7th corps.

By occupying Werbach with a single brigade, and placing his guns in the hollow, instead of on the

heights, the defence became of necessity feeble; but in drawing off his entire division to Ober- and Unter-Altertheim, instead of holding the heights by Böttigheim and Wenkheim, a strategical error was committed, which, had the enemy been able to take full advantage of it, might have had the gravest consequences.

Prince William, moreover, had not even informed Prince Alexander of his retreat. He sent, it is true, an aide-de-camp who failed to find the commander-in-chief, because he did not give himself the trouble to seek his Highness on the battle-field, but requested the commander of the 3rd division, whom he met with at Gross-Rinderfeld, to forward the message with which he was charged to head-quarters.

It was not till late at night that Prince Alexander ascertained that the Baden division had retired to, and was camping at and around, Ober-Altertheim. July 24.

The losses of the Prussians in the combats of this day were comparatively light, those of the 8th corps severe. The Prussians had no officer slain, but two of Welzien's Oldenburg officers were killed. The Prussians and their allies together had 11 officers wounded, 26 men killed, 151 men wounded, and 3 missing.

The 8th corps lost 7 officers and 63 men killed, 22 officers and 494 men wounded, 2 officers and 193 men missing. Besides the loss in men, the dismounted Baden gun, 2 ambulance

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waggons, and the entire provision train, of some 30 vehicles, fell into the hands of the Prussians. The proportion of loss falling on the 2nd division (Baden) was only 7 men killed, 1 officer and 59 men wounded, 18 men missing—a clear proof that their resistance was of the feeblest nature.

The conduct of this engagement, on the part of the 8th corps, exposes the operation to much criticism.

The 2nd Wurtemburg regiment did not occupy Bischofsheim till too late in the day to make any serious preparations for defence, by loopholing the houses, or erecting barricades in the streets and on the bridge. Why, then, if the town was not to be defended, was not the position on the left bank strengthened by breaking down the bridge and barricading the left bank? Why, again, after the evacuation of the town had been effected with trifling loss, was the division exposed to the serious and bloody repulses it sustained in repeated efforts to retake the position, although the further advance of the enemy could be, as it was, easily checked with little exposure and small risk, from the advantageous position on the left bank, although the bridge was crossed, and the houses and gardens on the left bank occupied by the Prussians?

The Wurtemburgers, too, were in sufficient force to have sent a detachment to take the Prussian right wing in flank, by way of Dietigheim; or the whole 4th division might have been employed in

that way, instead of advancing as they did along the narrow valley, in which they had to surmount the railway embankment, with the lofty right bank acclivities of the Tauber on their left flank, and front held by the enemy; whereas they might have gained the plateau under cover, and, once on the table-land, could have manœuvred and fought to advantage.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### COMBATS OF HELMSTADT, WERBACH, AND GERCHSEIM.

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THE Prussians did not pursue the retreating troops of the 8th corps to any distance beyond the Tauber, but contented themselves with assuring their hold of the important positions they had won.

Prince Alexander and the Bavarian commander-in-chief were both made aware, by the close of the day, that they were likely to be attacked by the entire force of the Prussian army of the Main, now numbering three complete divisions, comprising 53 battalions, 2 companies of pioneers, 29 squadrons, and 121 guns, under the command of General v. Manteuffel.

In junction alone of the two army corps could any good result be looked for, and it should have been the object of both commanders to devote their whole energies to that object.

During the night, Prince Alexander got full information of the exhausted condition of his 1st division, and that they were short of provisions. He also received a notification from the Bavarian head-quarters, acquainting him with the forward

movement of the Prussians from Wertheim; that there was danger of their intervening between the 7th and 8th corps, but that the Bavarians would be concentrated between Rossbrunn and Remmlingen. This position would be some fifteen English miles to the rear of the ground then held by the 8th corps, and entailed the necessity of their moving to their right, unless they gave up the defence of the line of retreat on Wurzburg.

It should here be mentioned that the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg with a corps of somewhat more than 20,000 men had marched from Leipzig, on July 23, into Bavaria, in aid of the Prussian movements. The Bavarian commander-in-chief paid so little attention to this attack, that he only detached four newly-formed battalions to oppose them, but as the Grand Duke's movements had no effect whatever on the general result of the campaign, the trifling events of the march of his corps, by way of Hof and Bayreuth to Nürnberg, where they arrived on July 31, may be passed over without further attention.*

Prince Charles of Bavaria was in face of Manteuffel's army, some 60,000 strong, with his Bavarian force of 50,000 and the 8th army corps, very nearly as numerous as the 7th; but by mismanagement, and by total failure in all military qualities save that of

* A skirmish took place with one of the Bavarian battalions near to Bayreuth, in which, with slight loss to themselves, the Prussians made above 200 prisoners.

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fighting courageously when engaged in the *melée*, he allowed his troops to be beaten in detail; and by following political objects worthy only of the narrowest views, needlessly sacrificed hundreds of valuable lives, when very different results would in all likelihood have attended an energetic and skilful use of the means at his disposal. These were ample enough fully to justify, if they did not imperiously demand, offensive and vigorous action on his part, instead of restricting himself to that bootless and unintelligent defence of his own national territory from which he could never be induced to depart.*

The effect of the engagements on the Tauber had somewhat deranged the Prussian plan of interposing betwixt the 7th and 8th corps, and the positions of the latter on the night of July 24 had drawn them nearer to their confederates. The roads, however, by which troops could be moved were reduced to two, viz., the high-road to Wurzburg, and that which leads from Werbach to Ober-Altertheim.

The cross-roads were all but impracticable, and

* In military qualities the Bavarian soldier is no whit inferior to the Prussian. The Podewiel's rifle, with which the infantry were armed, though a muzzle-loader, was an excellent weapon. The leadership was in fault, and far inferior to that of the Prussians, not only as regarded their senile commander-in-chief, Prince Charles, but the officers in general. The cry of 'treason' was often raised by the soldiery, irritated, and justly so, at finding their obstinate courage unavailing. As regards this imputation against the chief of the staff, General v. der Tann, see Appendix, No. XI.

the country, consisting of cultivated table-lands and deep valleys with wooded banks, presented great difficulties for military operations.

Had the Prussians marched directly forward from Wertheim on the 24th, as Manteuffel probably at first intended, his troops would have pushed back the Bavarians coming from the Spessart while the 8th corps was still too remote to lend them a hand. As matters stood, Stephan's and Prince Luitpold's divisions of the 7th corps were quite near enough to the Baden division, on the morning of the 25th, to have concerted their movements and acted in unison, had the commonest precautions towards that end been taken, or had not the will to lend assistance been totally wanting on the part of their confederates. Not only was no such concert attempted, but the two Bavarian divisions actually marched and fought separately as if each was an independent corps, and were each in turn broken and driven back, as could hardly fail to happen under the unity of command of their opponent; whilst Prince William of Baden, whose division was near at hand, refused to give the slightest aid to Prince Luitpold's hardly-pressed division, though earnestly requested to give him support.

Prince Charles of Bavaria, before being fully informed of the course of events on the Tauber, and that Prince Alexander had retreated, had sent an order, which only reached the head-quarters of the

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8th corps at 9 A.M. on the morning of the 25th, to hold that line, while the 7th corps was marching by Ober-Altertheim to his support.

About 10 A.M. an aide-de-camp reached Prince Charles with full details of the engagements on the 24th, and with the tidings that the 8th corps was retiring on Gerchseim. Hereupon Prince Charles sent a fresh order to Prince Alexander, to retake the line of the Tauber and to hold it with his entire force, and informed him that the Bavarian army would hasten to his aid.

It is difficult to explain how Prince Charles could have expected that the troops which, on the preceding day, had been unable to maintain themselves while strongly posted, and had already drawn back from the Tauber from eight to ten English miles, should again march forward, retake and hold the posts from which they had just been driven, with only the promise of assistance from the 7th corps.

At all events, the attempt to obey Prince Charles's orders could not be made, for the Prussian columns were already in movement along the whole front; and when the second order reached Prince Alexander, towards 11 A.M., the day's movement in retreat had already begun.

The weak Bavarian detachments on the right wing of the 8th corps offered but feeble support, and there was some risk of the line of retreat on Wurzburg being intercepted.

The troops of the whole corps were greatly fatigued, and had scarcely found time to cook a meal for the last thirty-six hours. The movements of the Bavarians also were so directed, that instead of pushing forward their left wing, which stood in contiguity to the Confederate corps, Prince Charles's troops appeared to be engaged in a movement of conversion. The right wing, which was the most remote, was to be brought up in support of the 8th corps, whilst the left was marched away from Neubrunn, from which point communication with Prince Alexander's force at Ober-Altertheim had already been established.

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The Prussians, meanwhile, were advancing both from Bischofsheim and Wertheim. Beyer's division marched from Werbach upon Neubrunn. About 11 A.M., at Böttigheim, the advanced guard fell in with some Bavarian cavalry outposts, who retired without making any stand. Towards 1.30 P.M., reaching Neubrunn, they found it held by a battalion of the 8th Bavarian infantry and a squadron of light dragoons of Stephan's division. These troops retreated as soon as the Prussian army opened fire upon them, and before the advancing infantry could overtake them, and took the direction of Helmstadt.

The Prussians had not expected to encounter the Bavarians so much to the southward. If the march on Altertheim had been pursued as at first intended, the Prussian left flank would have been exposed;

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General Beyer decided, therefore, to wait at Neubrunn for intelligence of Goeben's division.

The Bavarians, however, brought up some guns, and annoyed the Prussians so much in their position that the General decided on driving them back.

Two regiments, the 32nd and 20th, with a battery, advanced for that purpose, and the Bavarians retired, fighting, on Helmstadt. The Prussians did not wish to push the combat, but the Bavarians developed more force, and did not allow it to be broken off.

By degrees the Prussians gained the upper hand, and the Bavarians drew to the rear of Helmstadt towards Hettingen. The Bavarian artillery continued to seize on every advantage of ground to dispute the Prussian advance, while the obstinate defence of all wooded cover made by the Bavarian infantry cost many lives on both sides.

The superior arm of the Prussian infantry eventually prevailed over the constancy and courage of the Bavarian troops, who drew off through the woods and ravines, though their enemy could not but acknowledge the stoutness of their resistance.

Here also occurred a rencontre between Prussian hussars and Bavarian light dragoons, which ended in the discomfiture of the latter; whose commanding officer, Lieut.-Colonel Rohder, together with Captain Prince Taxis, the latter severely wounded, were taken prisoners.

The Prussian right wing encountered still greater

resistance, and General Manteuffel, who had come on the field during the combat, was obliged to reinforce the 32nd regiment, which had been held in check by the 39th Fusileers. This corps came into action about 5.30 P.M. They immediately advanced on the Bavarian infantry and drove them before them, following them for some distance in the direction of Waldbrunn.

During the progress of the action Prince Luitpold, who was in command of the Bavarian division that was engaged, sent to request assistance from Prince William of Baden, with whose division he was in actual communication.

Not a gun nor a man would this commander of a Confederate corps allow to move in support of his hardly-pressed allies. The Prussian accounts and the advocates of the Prince say, that he did not feel justified in lending the required aid without express orders from his commander-in-chief, part of the 8th corps being already engaged. But as Prince William's own division formed the link between the 8th and that portion of the 7th corps which was engaged, he should have asked for orders, if in doubt, especially as he was not summoned by his commander-in-chief to come to his aid. It might be supposed that the merest impulse of military instinct would have impelled him to lend a hand to his comrades in arms, who were fighting near him for a common cause, or that he should, at least, have

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made known to his commander Prince Luitpold's request, and have asked for orders.

As matters stood, the accumulation of charges made against Prince William of Baden is heavy—desertion of his post at Giessen on the *supposition* that his corps was left dangerously exposed; retreating from Werbach, on the 24th July, without offering more than a mere semblance of defence, when intrusted with a post of the utmost importance to the safety of the entire army; and finally refusing aid to Prince Luitpold, with whose division he was in actual communication, and whose troops were forced to retreat, almost before his own eyes.

Heinrich Blankenberg, one of the best historians of the war, and the Prince's warmest apologist, says, in reference to the last event, that the Prince conceived that, for the remainder of the campaign,* he had to confine himself within the narrowest limits in the discharge of his duty; that his acceding to Prince Luitpold's request did not fall within these limits, and that he was therefore justified in rejecting it, as exceeding his due faculty of independent action.

If such was Prince William's conception of his duty, it would have been better for his fame never to have accepted the command, or to have ceded it to some one whose convictions would not have interfered with the straightforward course of military

* After hearing of the Battle of Sadowa.

duty and obedience. Had matters taken a different turn at the termination of this eventful campaign, the expression of public opinion was so adverse to Prince William that he would, in all likelihood, have been called to account for his conduct before a military tribunal.

The repulse of Prince Luitpold's division was complete towards 6 P.M., and Beyer's division was halted with its front to the east, when they suddenly saw columns of troops marching towards the rear of their right wing. In uncertainty whether they were friends or foes, the Prussians immediately altered their line of battle, so as to present a front to the advancing masses.

This body of troops proved to be Stephan's division of the Bavarian army coming from Hettingen. Their outposts had been engaged at an earlier hour, and they had subsequently marched leisurely thence, in the direction of Altertheim.

Both corps speedily recognised each other as enemies, and two Bavarian batteries instantly opened with such a lively fire that the Prussian infantry sought cover in the nearest wood.

On the hill called the Frohnberg, the Prussian and Bavarian infantry came in collision. The Bavarians gave way, and the Prussian infantry advancing, soon brought their fire to bear on the guns, getting in dangerous proximity to them through high corn, and forcing them to limber up and retreat towards Hettingen.

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The infantry combat was extremely obstinate in the woodland, and the Prussians did not overcome the gallant resistance of their opponents without loss. The 20th Fusileers and the 32nd regiment, on the side of Prussia, suffered considerably, and on the Bavarian side the second battalion of rifles was very severely handled. The Prussian guns gradually advanced, and took up the commanding position whence the two Bavarian batteries had begun the action, and their fire caused considerable loss to the retreating Bavarian infantry.

Again, however, the Bavarian artillerists found a favourable post north of Hettingen, and soon drew off the fire of the Prussian batteries from the retiring troops, engaging the enemy's guns with advantage. The lateness of the hour—it was about 8 P.M.—and the coming darkness, as well as the decided retreat of the Bavarians, speedily brought the contest to an end.

The Prussians assembled their scattered troops, and stood for the night with their out-posts close upon Hettingen, the main body bivouacking in and around Helmstadt. The Prussian loss was 1 officer and 30 men killed, 12 officers and 273 men wounded. The return also gives 37 men missing, with the painful remark that these were almost exclusively dead, left in the woodland.

The Bavarian losses of the day are not given, as their returns were not made up till after the more serious engagement of the following day at Ross-

brunn. They were probably about on a par with the killed and wounded of their opponents.

It is impossible to avoid animadverting severely on the total want of precaution and unity of movement characterising the Bavarian proceedings of this day, or to praise too highly the decision and skill with which General Beyer's division successively encountered and beat the two bodies of his adversaries' force, each of them about equal to his own division in numbers.

Not less blamable was the tardiness which marks the communication of that unreasonable order of the Bavarian commander-in-chief to Prince Alexander of Hesse, to hold the Tauber line, while the 7th corps advanced on Waldbrunn, and the leisurely and careless way in which the Bavarian troops executed their movement in that direction, without even sustaining their own communications, as though they had no enemy in their front.

Had that order reached Prince Alexander a couple of hours earlier, whilst part of the 8th corps were at Gross-Rinderfeld, nothing would have been easier than to have directed their march upon Neubrunn, to form at that point the intended junction with the Bavarians. Instead of this, the Bavarians had already been withdrawn from Neubrunn. The 4th division of the 8th corps was then already approaching Gerchseim, towards 2.30 P.M., when Prince Alexander, riding out from that place, July 25.

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found the division formed, *à cheval*, across the high road, with the Nassau brigade in front and the Austrians in the second line of battle. The reserve cavalry and part of the reserve artillery were to the left rear, in the open field; and here took place the last combat sustained by the 8th army corps of the expiring Germanic Confederation.

Goeben's division of the Prussian army was advancing by the Wurzburg high road. It has already been seen how Beyer's division was occupied about the same hour that Goeben's corps found itself in presence of the enemy. Towards 4 P.M. General Goeben ordered the 13th regiment and the fusileer battalion of the 53rd to occupy the wood on both sides of the high road. Two of his batteries took up ground, in front of the wood; the two other battalions of the 53rd were held in reserve. Kummer's brigade was directed to march on the left flank of Prince Alexander's force, between Ilmsplan and Gerchseim.

The Prussian batteries speedily found themselves engaged by twenty-four guns — two Austrian and one Nassau battery. Some of the Prussian guns were speedily dismounted, and, although the range was from 2,200 to 2,600 yards, the Prussians soon suffered so much in men and *matériel*, that they had to draw off, after contending against heavy odds for a long half-hour.

Hereupon the artillery opened with grape and

shrapnell on the wood, to cover an attack by the Nassau infantry. When, however, these troops advanced for that purpose, the rapid fire of the needle-gun, from the defensive position of the Prussian infantry, was so murderous, that the Nassauers went to the right-about before getting within 350 yards of the enemy's position.

Prince Alexander intended to renew this attack; but the Hessian and Wurtemburg divisions on which he depended were already so exhausted by the exertions of the preceding day and marching on short rations, that their commanders represented their inability to act offensively with effect. Indeed two brigades of the Wurtemburg division had already drawn back towards Kist. Nothing more, then, remained to be done than to hold the position.

Heavy firing on the right had at first shown clearly that the Bavarians were engaged, so that Prince Alexander could calculate with tolerable accuracy what numbers the Prussians could bring to bear on his force. Proceeding himself towards his right wing, he found that Prince William of Baden was drawing back his division towards the Wurzburg road, and the combat towards Neubrunn had ceased. Indications, too, were not wanting of what had befallen the Bavarians, as some hundreds of their train equipages were crowding towards the Wurzburg high road by that which leads from Ober-Altertheim.

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The Prussian troops under General Wrangel were about the same time attacking the left wing of the 8th corps from the direction of Schönfeld, while the Hessian troops, whom Wrangel found in his front, and who held the 8th corps' left flank, offered a feeble resistance.

The artillery of the 8th corps was occupied in checking the Prussian advance on this side, when General Goeben's two batteries, having refitted, recommenced the attack in the centre, reinforced by a battery of Oldenburg rifled guns, and directed their fire with effect on the Nassau and Austrian columns in front of Gerchseim.

These troops speedily drew off, and Kummer's Prussian, and Welzien's Oldenburg brigades moved menacingly forward, towards the high ground, westward of Gerchseim.

The Austrian division had an awkward defile to traverse, and, the road being filled with equipages of all kinds, the passage was effected with the greatest difficulty. Had the ground admitted of the employment of cavalry, the retreat of the 8th corps might on this occasion have been converted into a rout. As matters fell out, the retiring troops surmounted the difficulty, and the reserve artillery had fortunately passed the road before it became encumbered by the baggage and provision waggons.

It was already becoming dark when the Prussian

infantry drew near the wood at the entrance of the hollow way. Four batteries of artillery, with some Hessian, Baden, and most of the Wurtemburg infantry, remained to cover the retreat, and were able to hold the Prussians in check. It is even alleged that a Wurtemburg battalion (first battalion, 2nd regiment) repulsed an attack of the Prussians at the point of the bayonet.

Nightfall seems to have put a timely end to the fight. The last regiment that cleared the narrow pass appears to have been the Baden corps, called the Leib regiment, but the Wurtembürgers were the last engaged in actual combat.

The 8th corps bivouacked in and around Kist. The passage of the road had been so encumbered that the infantry had to make their way through the woods or fields by the road-side wherever practicable.

Detachments of the Bavarian army, of all arms, and a battery of their artillery, were intermingled with the retiring corps, and there was great confusion. The loss of life of the 8th corps in action had been trifling, but it is more than probable that, had the fighting commenced a few hours earlier, the retreat which this corps effected without loss would have ended in serious disaster.

The careless manner in which important matters were transacted in this campaign was here remarkably brought into evidence. The church clock of the little town of Kist was striking 8 P.M.

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as Prince Alexander, with his staff, was entering the town, when he was met by Lieut.-Colonel Werren, of the Bavarian staff, with the plan of operations for the day then ended!

It is further remarkable that this order of the day did not contain one syllable as to the combination of movements of the 8th corps with those intended to be made by the 7th.

The returns of casualties on both sides show that the combat on this day between the 8th army corps and their enemy was by no means serious. The Prussians had only 8 men killed, 3 officers and 48 men wounded, and 1 man missing. Of the 8th corps, 1 officer and 12 men were killed, 2 officers and 87 men wounded, 5 officers and 146 under-officers and men missing.

The strategy of both the Confederate commanders on this 25th of July has been severely animadverted upon.

It was the only occasion during the whole campaign in which Prince Alexander of Hesse's troops were so concentrated as to have had the possibility of striking a blow with largely superior force. He was attacked by the single Prussian division commanded by General v. Goeben, Beyer's and Flies's divisions operating against the Bavarians. Although Prince Alexander's disposable troops were double the number of the Prussians who attacked them, he refused the combat, and after a cannonade, in which

the superiority of his force in the important arm of artillery was never for an instant doubtful, drew off from advantageous positions, and declined to give battle. Various grounds are alleged for Prince Alexander's conduct,—the exhaustion of the Wurtemburgers; the early retreat of Prince William of Baden's division without orders; the apparent check which the Bavarians had met with, as shown by their field equipages and scattered men pressing towards the roads on the right wing and rear of the 8th corps.

The charge of premature retreat on this occasion made against Prince William of Baden, is not so well established as that of his having refused aid to Prince Luitpold of Bavaria near Helmstadt. At any rate a portion of the Baden division were amongst the last in the field, and their artillery shared in covering the retreat.

The want of concert between Prince Luitpold's and General Stephan's divisions of the 7th corps, and the mode in which they contrived to fight and get beaten separately, is at least as eccentric a feature of this day's proceedings as any other event that marked its progress, and justifies the remark of a writer already quoted,* that if a laurel branch could be awarded to Prince Alexander of Hesse, Prince Charles of Bavaria ought to have received a crown of poppies.

* Blankenberg.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

NIGHT OF JUNE 25—COMBAT OF ROSSBRUNN—RETREAT OF EIGHTH ARMY CORPS AND OF BAVARIAN ARMY OVER THE MAIN—RETROSPECTIVE CRITICISM OF CAMPAIGN.

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THE bivouac of the 8th army corps on the night between the 25th and 26th of June was full of those incidents which mark the retreats of beaten armies—endless confusion, no rest for the wearied troops, and seemingly bootless attempts to reduce chaos to order. The commandant of Wurzburg had shut the gates, and as convoys of provision sent from the town encountered the many equipages belonging to the 8th as well as to the 7th corps, that were making for Wurzburg, the whole road from Kist to Wurzburg became encumbered, and at one narrow point near Höchberg there was an absolute stoppage.

All night long, the gendarmerie laboured in vain to get a clear passage, and it was not till the gates of Wurzburg were opened, on the morning of the 26th, that the crowd of army transport trains found it possible to pursue their route.

Meanwhile staff-officers of the 8th corps had communicated with the Bavarian commander-in-chief and had made known to him Prince Alexander's

opinions, that, in the exhausted condition of the greater portion of the troops of his army, a retreat across the Main was absolutely necessary, and that fighting was out of the question till some repose had recruited the physical powers of the greater number.

Prince Charles sent word to Prince Alexander that the position of the Bavarian army was seriously menaced since the result of the effort to assume the offensive on the 25th had failed. It only remained, then, to secure the retreat across the Main. To effect this, Prince Charles ordered the 8th corps to take up a position on the Nicolausberg—the heights in front of Wurzburg—and to hold this ground as long as possible, while the Bavarians would attack the Prussians vigorously on the morrow with the view of covering their passage of the river by Zell and other points below Wurzburg.

The Prussians, on their side, could only expect to encounter the united forces of their opponents on the morrow.

Their dispositions were taken accordingly. General Flies, who, in his forward movement on the 25th, had only skirmished with the Bavarians, but had detached a large portion of his division to support General Beyer, was ordered from Dertingen and Wüstenzell to Hettingen. Beyer's and Goeben's divisions held the ground they occupied at the conclusion of the engagements of the 25th.

The Bavarians took up a strong position with their

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reserves at Rossbrunn with the main body of the army between Hettstadt and Waldbrunn.

Prince Alexander ordered his 1st division to hold Höchberg and communicate with the 7th corps; the 2nd and 3rd divisions to take post on the Nicolausberg. The 4th division was ordered to Heidingsfeld to secure the passage of the Main at that point.

The reserves both of cavalry and artillery were directed on that point and on Wurzburg, and ordered to cross the Main. Two bridges had been thrown across the river, to facilitate these movements, and a third was to be constructed below the city, at a spot called Talavera.

By sunrise all the troops were to be in movement.

Some of the consequences of the confused retreat now became apparent. The commandant of the 1st division, General Hardegg, was nowhere to be met with. He had ridden in the night to Wurzburg, and, finding the gates shut, had bivouacked outside the walls.

Before leaving his corps, this officer had ordered his three generals of brigade to march on Wurzburg as soon as the men had made a meal; and this order was given without communication with the commander-in-chief.

So great, however, were the obstructions to be encountered, that, though these troops made every effort to penetrate through the fields and by the roadside, one brigade alone got as far as Eisingen,

and the whole body passed the night in the open country, as they best could.

Unless the combined forces of the 7th and 8th corps were in condition to assume the offensive, their position was one of considerable danger. The nature of the ground was unfavourable for a defensive engagement; at least this was the case as regarded that portion of the position which the 8th corps had to occupy. The Nicolausberg commands the front approaches to Wurzburg, but has deeply cut ravines bounding its flanks, right and left, and the descent to the rear is exceedingly steep.

Three bad roads lead downwards towards the Main; and, the crown of the hill once gained by an enemy, troops retreating from it are under fire, without the least cover, for the whole line of their retreat to the river.

When the 2nd division came up, the 3rd was drawn off from the Nicolausberg towards the Main, as the commander, General Perglas, represented that his men were in a state of exhaustion. July 26.

Already, before five in the morning, fighting had begun between the Prussians and Bavarians, and the heaviness of the firing speedily indicated that the engagement was serious. The Prussians, as at first appeared, had thrown their entire force on the 7th corps, for the 8th was left wholly unmolested. Under these circumstances it might have been expected that Prince Alexander would at least

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have made some effort to assist his allies; but, although the cannonade lasted from five in the morning till near upon noonday, not a man of the 8th corps was detached in aid of the Bavarians.

Already, before 9 A. M., the greater part of Prince Alexander's force had safely crossed the Main, and when towards twelve o'clock a Bavarian column made its appearance at Heidingsfeld, in order to pass the bridge, Prince Alexander withdrew his harassed troops from the Nicolausberg, and his whole army crossed the river, either by the bridges at Wurzburg, or at Heidingsfeld.

What had been passing meanwhile on the right wing of the allies, towards Rossbrunn, where a severe action had evidently been fought betwixt 5 and 11 A.M.?

It had been the intention of the Bavarians to attack the Prussians at daybreak. Similar counsels appear to have influenced the Prussian commanders, so that the conflict came on earlier than either side expected. General Flies, whose outposts stood on the evening of the 25th in front of Hettingen, had found daylight enough to recognise the importance of occupying certain heights in his front, and at the early hour of three in the morning was moving to support his somewhat exposed advanced guard. Already, during his advance, the General received notice that the enemy were on the move, and he instantly despatched two battalions, one from the

11th and one from the 59th regiment, to occupy the Kirchberg. The Bavarians were at the same time taking up a position on the high ground to the north and south of Hettingen, and their column actually reached the Kirchberg in anticipation of the Prussians, whilst their other troops were advancing on the left. Hettingen was thus likely to be surrounded, and General Flies found it necessary to assume the defensive till the remainder of his division came up. The two battalions, however, which had advanced on the Kirchberg, with the first battalion of the 11th regiment in reserve, attacked the position. The lower part of this hill is covered with a vineyard, and the summit crowned by wood. The Prussians gained ground rapidly, and the wood being held by only one battalion, the eighth Jäger regiment of the Bavarian army, the Prussians drove them back from the front of the wood, and eventually across the high road, into another wooded hill, called the Hesnert, where they came on their supports. The Bavarians had contested the ground obstinately, and the combat, though brief, was bloody.

The three Prussian battalions, in following up their advantage, were exposed to a heavy fire both of infantry and artillery, in spite of which they carried the Hesnert hill, taking an officer and more than 100 men prisoners, and then formed up, in readiness for further advance.

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By this time the detachments of General Flies's division, which were in the rear, had reached Hettingen, while the fire of the Bavarian guns from Rossbrunn, directed on Hettingen, set some houses on fire. Had the Bavarians been able to hold the Kirchberg, no Prussian artillery could have been brought up to reply to this fire, but a Prussian battalion was now getting into position, when they found themselves under the fire of a previously masked Bavarian battery, which, however, speedily retired.

Another Prussian battery now came up, and the fire of both was directed on the Bavarian infantry showing themselves in mass on the slope of the Leite hill; and when these got out of range, the Prussian guns replied to the Bavarian guns at Rossbrunn.

Had Prince Charles known that he had only the two Prussian divisions of Beyer and Flies opposed to him, numbering about 33,000 men, he might have thrown upon them his entire force of 50,000 combatants; but, apprehensive that Goeben's division might fall on his left flank, he disposed his first and third division, with his cavalry and part of his artillery reserve, on that flank, near Wald-Büttelbrunn, fronting southwards, where they remained inactive. Goeben's division, being posted in and around Gerchseim, was too far from the scene of action, and too completely separated from it by the

impracticable nature of the country, to take any share in the engagement.

Thus it came to pass that the two Bavarian divisions of Generals Feder and Hartmann, with the reserve brigade of infantry, and the artillery attached to it, had to sustain the whole brunt of the action with the two Prussian divisions, somewhat stronger in numbers, and with the superiority of armament given by the needle-gun.

Under these circumstances, the Prussian account of the action renders full justice to the energy of the Bavarian resistance, and shows that their own eventual success was dearly purchased.

The several positions of the Bavarians were indeed finally carried, but the Prussian losses attest the severity of the struggle.

The attack on the Leite hill in particular is minutely described. The Bavarians held it in considerable force, and till they were driven from it the Prussians could not deploy, since the fire of the troops holding that point searched the whole open space between the hill and the buildings of Hettingen. Another flanking hill, called the Brunnschlag, was occupied by the Bavarians, and on this the Prussian attack was first directed.

The second battalion of the 36th regiment led the attack, while the third battalion advanced straight upon the Leite.

Charging forward in columns of companies, the

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men of the third battalion were received with so heavy a fire in front and flank that they instinctively diverged to the right, and so came in support of their comrades, who had already penetrated the outskirts of the Brunnschlag.

General Freyhold, seeing the risk which the position of Hettingen ran, by this scattering of his troops to his right, ordered an immediate attack upon the Leite hill.

The General himself, with the colonel of the regiment, von Thile, led the first battalion of the 36th, formed in half-battalion- columns to the attack.

Both officers had their horses wounded, and Major v. Liepinski, chief officer of the battalion, was killed, but the advance of the second and third battalions had freed the access to the position from the flanking fire from the Brunnschlag. Halting for a few minutes' breathing time at the edge of the meadow fronting the wood, and encouraged by their gallant commander, the columns penetrated the wood at the double quick.

Detachments also of the 59th regiment joined the 36th Magdeburg Fusileers, from the left wing, and advanced steadily on the wooded heights to their front, and, penetrating the cover, drove the Bavarians, in hand-to-hand fight, before them. That the task of these brave troops was no light one is sufficiently shown by the loss of the 36th Magde-

burg Fusileers alone, which amounted to nearly 400 men and a third of their officers.

After more than two hours' obstinate fighting, the Bavarian position was lost. The attack had cost the Prussians dearly. The Bavarians suffered proportionately more heavily in their retreat, and the more so that they made several attempts to retake the positions they had lost. The Prussians also made repeated fruitless efforts to deploy from the woodlands which they had so gallantly won, as the Bavarian artillery obstinately disputed their further advance.

In the centre of the position the action was almost entirely carried on by the artillery. The Bavarian guns held their ground near the Rossbrunn posthouse till past 6 A.M. Towards 7 A.M. the Prussians were reinforced in this arm, and their infantry began to push forward and repulse the remaining detachments of their opponents; while the troops of Beyer's division coming from Helmstadt appeared on the field of action. The serious losses of the 36th regiment caused it to be relieved from its position in the front by the 20th regiment, and it now became evident to the Prussians that the Bavarians were only fighting in retreat.

Hartmann's division was marching towards Hettstadt, the reserve infantry brigade deployed on the high ground between Rossbrunn and Creusenheim, behind the Mülbach, and the brigade of Feder's

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Bavarian division, which had been driven from the Leite hill and Bozelberg, fell back upon the second brigade of this division.

Against this position, the right and left wings of the Prussian army, together with the centre, advanced towards 8 A.M. The Bavarians did not offer serious resistance, but drew back in all directions towards Hettstadt. On the right wing only was there a show of resistance, at the village of Mädelhofen; but the 70th Prussian regiment stormed the village, which was not seriously defended, and the Bavarians retired upon the adjoining wood. Here again they held their ground for a time; but, after withstanding the fire of two Prussian batteries, the Bavarians gave way before the attack of the enemy's infantry, and retreated on their supports. Their artillery, strongly posted in front of Hettstadt, checked the Prussian advance; and several efforts made by the Prussian gunners to plant their pieces in some spot whence they might maintain the combat were frustrated by the superiority of the Bavarian fire. By degrees the combat died away, the Prussian infantry being too much exhausted to push their advantage. It was on this day, between 11 A.M. and noon, that there occurred an engagement of the cavalry of both armies, which the Bavarians look back to as a highly creditable portion of the day's struggle.

The whole of the Prussian cavalry, with a battery of horse artillery, had been directed against the right

wing of the Bavarian army. The Prussian force consisted of three squadrons of the 6th Dragoons, two of the 10th Landwehr Hussars, and one of the 9th Hussars, formed as a regiment, together with two squadrons of the 5th Dragoons.

Advancing towards Hettstadt, these troops perceived Bavarian guns and light dragoons drawn up with their front to the north-west, stationed by Prince Charles, for the defence of his right wing. On these the Prussians advanced, and drove in the flankers, but at the same time found themselves exposed to a fire of grape from the Bavarian artillery, which, as the guns were pointed high, did them little harm.

The Bavarian light horse now advanced, and, sending forward two squadrons, were encountered by a squadron of the Prussian 6th Dragoons, and one of the 10th Landwehr, and repulsed. In following them, the Prussian horse again got under fire of the Bavarian guns, and had to withdraw. The two other squadrons of the Bavarians now came forward, but were in their turn driven back by the remaining two squadrons of Prussian hussars. The entire reserve brigade of the Bavarian army—two regiments of cuirassiers and a regiment of lancers—then advanced to their support, and before this overwhelming force the Prussians gave way. In flight and in pursuit, the entire mass of horsemen bore down upon the battery of horse artillery accompanying the Prussian cavalry.

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The officer in command of this battery promptly got his guns in position, sent the horses and limbers into the wood in his rear, and at short range opened with case shot on the mass that was advancing upon him, with such effect as to stop the career of those in pursuit. The two Prussian squadrons of dragoons charged the flank of the cuirassiers at the same moment, and the other squadrons rallying, became in their turn pursuers. For the third time, however, the Prussians found themselves compelled to draw out of range of the enemy's guns, and two more regiments of Bavarian cavalry appearing on the field, the Prussian commander was obliged to retire on his guns, which had also drawn to the rear. Hereupon the Bavarian cavalry charged the guns, but were repulsed by the Prussian fire.

The Prussian cavalry, finding themselves too weak to attempt to disquiet the Bavarians further, drew off out of artillery range, and the retreat of the entire Bavarian army across the Main ceased to be interfered with on that part of the battle-field. Had it been known to the Prussian commanders that the whole of the 8th army corps had quitted its positions, it is more than probable that greater efforts would have been made to harass the retreat of the Bavarians, although the marches and combats of three successive days had tried to the utmost the stamina and endurance of the Prussian troops of all arms. Their official accounts allege that the pursuit

was not vigorously pushed for political reasons, as enough had either been already accomplished to secure acquisitions which Prussia desired, when the period for treating arrived, without further combating, or could still be effected, if further territorial occupation were desired, by any coveted district being taken possession of by flank marches to the left of the Confederate forces.

The day of Rossbrunn is not the less highly honourable to the Bavarian arms, although fought merely to cover retreat.

Had Prince Charles measured the situation correctly, he might probably have succeeded in inflicting a defeat, instead of himself suffering repulse; but that inaptitude and want of promptness in seizing opportunities which marked the conduct of the entire campaign on the side of the Confederates, cramped his Royal Highness's movements to the last, and bitter must have been the mortification of the brave men he commanded when they saw that the courage and steadiness which, under better leadership, would, in all human probability, have crowned their efforts with victory, only sufficed to gain them the equivocal honour of having made a creditable retreat.

Disposing of the full strength of 50,000 men, Prince Charles secured that retreat before the attack of 33,000 Prussians, without the loss of a gun or other trophy of victory. But it must not be forgotten that the 8th corps, numbering 45,000 men,

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was at the same moment retrograding before the single Prussian division commanded by General v. Goeben, and that without being attacked, and in the immediate vicinity of the 7th corps; that the Prince, moreover, left half his force inactive, and could only have done so from apprehension of what Goeben's corps might effect on his left flank.

His mistrust of Prince Alexander must have been great indeed if he conceived that, in case the three divisions of the Prussian army threw themselves on the Bavarians alone, these would receive no assistance from the 8th corps. The vigorous resistance which his two divisions opposed to the two Prussian divisions with which they were engaged, gives fair grounds for presuming that the result of the day would have been very different had the entire force at his disposal been employed. But as the retrograde movement across the Main had been resolved on, and Prince Charles fought on the 26th only to secure that movement, though both the necessity of his retreat and the strategy by which it was effected are open to the severest criticism, impartial judgment will not withhold the meed of praise due to the Bavarian troops for their steadfastness in action.

The Bavarians themselves speak with peculiar pride of the exploits of their cavalry on this day, and call their charges the 'revenge for Hünfeld.' Rigorous justice, however, would award the palm to their infantry and artillery, and decide that the Bavarian

horse, numbering as nearly as possible in the proportion of two to one of their enemy, ought to have crushed those eight squadrons that so gallantly contended with them, and have captured their guns. As is ordinarily the case in cavalry combats, the Prussian loss was trivial: 7 men killed, 18 wounded, 24 missing. Their total return for the day gives 4 officers and 97 men killed, 35 officers and 680 men wounded, 40 men missing. The Bavarian returns for the two days of Helmstadt and Rossbrunn, the 25th and 26th of July, amount to 22 officers and 110 men killed, 47 officers and 898 men wounded, 6 officers and 507 men prisoners and missing. As in other combats in this district, the greater proportion of the missing on both sides were men killed and left in the desperate conflicts in the woodland The Prussians only claim to have made about 200 unwounded prisoners in the two days' combats, so that the number of these unfortunate lost soldiers was considerable.

That blame which the just severity of military criticism pronounces on the proceedings of the Confederate generals for their faulty strategy on the 24th, 25th, and 26th of July is converted into unqualified admiration in examining the physical endurance, courage, and intelligence in action shown by the Prussian soldiers in those memorable days from the 27th of June to the 29th of July, and the ability with which they were led.

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The operations last under consideration were conducted by General v. Manteuffel, from the period of his combined movement from Frankfort, Darmstadt, and Aschaffenburg, on the 21st and 22nd of July. His troops found the enemy in their front on the 23rd. The combat of that day was but a skirmish; but from the morrow till the 26th they were engaged in a series of actions, most of which were contests sufficiently severe to try their courage and endurance to the utmost.

It is no real disparagement of Prussian successes to say that they were as much to be attributed to the faults of their opponents as to their own high military qualities. Something they owed no doubt to the superiority of their armament. The needle-gun probably saved them from a repulse at Bischofsheim on the 24th of July, by its efficiency in a defensive position; and the respect which this weapon inspired contributed largely to the inglorious break-off of the conflict at Gerchseim on the 26th of July, when Prince Alexander's entire force shunned coming to close quarters with Goeben's single division!

But a review of the soldierly excellence of the Prussian Army of the Main, and of the talent of its commanders, ought to embrace the whole period from the battle of Langensalza to the convention finally entered into at Wurzburg.

Though the rashness of General v. Flies may be

censured for fighting at Langensalza, when a delay of twenty-four hours would probably have compelled a bloodless capitulation of the Hanoverian army, it is impossible not to admire that General's courage in venturing to attack an enemy superior in force, or to be insensible to the high qualities of the troops he led into an unequal contest. It is true the Prussian arms received at Langensalza the only check they met with in all their operations in South Germany; but the object of detaining the Hanoverians was gained, and the General's subsequent leadership of his division showed how well he merited the confidence of his superiors and of his men.

After Langensalza we come to the commandership-in-chief of General v. Falckenstein. Although this general fell into disfavour with the Prussian Government, it cannot but be acknowledged that he was removed from the command of the army after conducting a series of operations brilliant enough, both in strategy and successful combats, to mark him as one of the most able of the Prussian commanders. His dispositions, in fact, by preventing the junction of the 7th and 8th army corps, paved the way for the victorious issue of the entire campaign, albeit it was his fortunate rival in courtly favour, rather than in the highest military qualities, General v. Manteuffel, who carried operations to a triumphant issue.

The severity shown by General v. Falckenstein to the city of Frankfort has been told in its proper

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place without disguise, and censured as it seemed to deserve; but this appreciation of the General's misconduct does not diminish the admiration due to his great merit as a strategist and commander in the field. Anyone who will take the trouble to follow the march of the troops of the Army of the Main from Langensalza and Eisenach to Frankfort, will make himself acquainted with details of combinations and of action exhibiting some of the first qualifications of military science.

If he failed to pursue his advantage over the Bavarians at Dermbach and Zella—to which in part (as reported checks) the General's removal from his command has been ascribed—this was the result of a calculated restraint, and only a portion of that admirably graduated and measured advance by which this able commander maintained the indispensable relative distances between his own army and the two corps to which he was opposed, to render possible the successive blows which he struck the Bavarians at Kissingen and Hammelburg, and the 8th corps at Laufach and Aschaffenburg.

In spite of his temporary disgrace, General v. Falckenstein must at this day be regarded as one among those distinguished men whose abilities have placed them in the foremost rank during the eventful period of 1866; and notwithstanding the harsh treatment which his instructions, or his own arbitrary will, led him to inflict on Frankfort, his name

stands forth as a good administrator, as well as a most efficient military chief. Generals Goeben, Flies, and Beyer were able lieutenants of both captains, and worthily distinguished themselves in command of their respective divisions.

The Bavarians, as has been seen, after their retreat from Rossbrunn, withdrew, without further molestation, across the Main, by military bridges constructed at Beitshöcheim and Mittel-Zell, as well as by Wurzburg; so that now, for the first time, the 7th and the 8th army corps were really united, and strongly posted along the commanding positions afforded by the right bank of the Main. Wurzburg was held as a *tête-de-pont*, and Prince Alexander's head-quarters were for the time established there.

The withdrawal of the 8th corps from the position of the Nicolausberg, and their retreat across the Main, have been much criticised, as Prince Charles's orders were that the position should be held as long as possible. Now no orders were given for their retreat, and they were not attacked. The motives put forward for drawing off the troops without orders are that the ground was unfavourable for defence, that the greater part of the army was thoroughly exhausted, and that retreat in the face of an enemy must have led to disaster; moreover that the retrograde movement of the Bavarians was almost simultaneously effected. July 26.

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The fortress of Marienberg, which covers the approach to Wurzburg, crowns the hills on which it is constructed at such a height that its guns cease to cover the road within short range—in other words, as soon as it begins the descent of the deep ravine separating the Marienberg from the Nicolausberg. Works following the profile of the ground descend the hill-side, and connect the fortress with Wurzburg; and these lines, as well as the fortress, were well armed, the best pieces being long brass 18-pounders, with the customary additions of Cohorn mortars and carronades in the embrasures of the casemates. Though able to resist any battering which its walls might have to withstand from the Prussian field-pieces, the place could not have stood twenty-four hours before siege guns.

July 26. Goeben's division of the Prussian army had rested during the entire day of July 26 in and around Gerchseim. The ammunition ran short, and the men were exhausted.

Flies's division bivouacked at Rossbrunn, Beyer's at Mädelhofen, and their communication with Goeben's division was maintained by patrols.

July 27. On the morning of the 27th, the Prussians found no hostile troops in their front on their side of the Main. Goeben's division advanced till they found themselves within range of the heavy guns of the Marienberg, and some small Bavarian detachments, acting as outposts, withdrew within the fortress.

The ground whence the fortress could be cannonaded was within long range from the right bank of the Main; and the Prussian officers, in reconnoitring, perceived field batteries in course of construction on the opposite heights, which would to some extent flank the guns they could put in position against the Marienberg.

A fire of wall-pieces from a range of about 1,000 yards was directed against the reconnoitrers and the Prussian tirailleurs who attempted to approach the walls.

The Prussians had in the morning sent troops towards Heidingsfeld, but the military bridges had been removed and the town bridge barricaded, while Count Neipperg's division was securely posted on the heights of the right bank of the Main. As soon as the heads of the Prussian columns showed themselves, the fire of thirty-eight rifled guns was directed upon them. The Prussians made more than one attempt to plant guns, and to attack the Marienberg from this side, but were obliged to abandon the attempt from that quarter. On the side of the Nicolausberg, and from the Hexenberg, they got their guns in position at ranges of from 1,300 to 1,550 yards, and opened fire between 12 and 1 P.M. from four batteries of field-pieces. As the fire of guns of this calibre could produce little effect on the works, it was almost wholly directed at the arsenal and buildings within the fortress.

The Prussian guns, besides having to contend with

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the fire from the fortress itself, were exposed to the long-range but partially flanking fire of the field batteries of the 8th corps from the other side of the Main, but the distance of 3,000 to over 4,000 yards rendered their fire very ineffective. It was otherwise with the guns of the fortress, which caused the Prussians some loss in men, and disabled several of their guns. Still they succeeded in setting some of the buildings in the fortress on fire, and content, as it appeared, with this result, ceased firing towards

July 27. 2 P.M., when the burning of the buildings within the Marienberg was speedily stayed.

# CHAPTER XXV.

FROM PASSAGE OF MAIN AT WURZBURG TO CONCLUSION OF PEACE—GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

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THE situation of the Confederate army after passing the Main was peculiar. To an active and enterprising commander-in-chief it might have offered fascinating prospects of adventure, as the two corps stood at his disposal, counting more than 90,000 men, in front of little more than half their number. There is, however, no indication that Prince Charles of Bavaria entertained any other than the single idea of coming to a suspension of arms as speedily as possible. He had actually been informed that the preliminaries of peace were signed at Nicolausberg, between Austria and Prussia on the 24th of July. Thus the peril of continuing to wage war with a Power which had humiliated so mighty a rival as Austria may well have quenched any notions of taking vengeance for his many checks, if such a thought ever occurred to him. His strategical position was too strong, and his force too considerable, for him to fear an attack; but the risks of moving were great, and, from the nature of the

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country, his only practicable line of retreat must be to the north. If an eye is cast on the map it will be seen that the Confederate force stood on the apex of a peninsula formed by the meanders of the Main, a line drawn from Schweinfurt to Gmünden forming the base of a triangle. If Prince Charles moved westward, General Manteuffel could bar his way; if eastward, he would be surely and closely pursued, and the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg's corps of some 20,000 men was in his front. To force the passage of the Main, and again fight on the ground he had lost, was too hazardous. It was perhaps happy for the bloodless sequel of this campaign that the powerful means in his hands failed to inspire Prince Charles with any desire to make use of them, and that he stood purely on the defensive.

He could probably have overwhelmed the Duke of Mecklenburg had he turned suddenly upon him, or, covered by the works of the Marienberg, have offered battle in an advantageous position under the walls of that fortress. None of these projects either presented themselves to his mind, or found acceptance there if laid before him by his military advisers.

Already, on the 27th, towards evening, Prince Charles had received from Baron v. der Pfordten a notification of the cessation of hostilities betwixt Austria and Prussia, and a second intimation from the Royal Cabinet at Munich that a similar arrange-

ment had been concluded on behalf of Bavaria, and the Prince had communicated this intelligence to General Manteuffel under flag of truce. The General, however, not having himself received any special instructions, did not conceive that he was authorised implicitly to rely on the authenticity of the reported fact, coming from the enemy's camp, and refused to suspend hostilities.

Prince Charles had also demanded that Wurzburg, as an open town, should be spared from attack. Some of the Prussian shells aimed at the Marienberg had already fallen into the town, and, though doing little mischief, caused alarm. General v. Manteuffel's answer was that, being defended by a citadel (the Marienberg), Wurzburg could not be held to be an open town, and must abide the consequences; if however, the city was surrendered, all danger would be avoided, and on that condition the General was willing to grant a suspension of arms for eight days. To this reply an answer was required by 7 A.M. on the morning of the 28th. To enforce his demands, General Manteuffel caused batteries to be constructed during the night, and his three divisions received orders to hold themselves in readiness for action on the morrow.

It was Manteuffel's object to gain possession of Wurzburg either by force or craft, and the General set himself assiduously to attain that important end.

On the morning of the 28th Lieut.-General v. July 28.

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der Tann, of the Bavarian staff, reached the Prussian head-quarters, and an officer of the Prussian staff returned with him to the Bavarian head-quarters at Rottendorff. Terms had been already agreed on for the surrender of Wurzburg—neutralising the Marienberg fortress—if the King of Bavaria's assent should be obtained, and this was to be asked for by telegraph. In this critical moment a telegram was received with the news that a suspension of arms for Bavaria, to commence on the 2nd of August, had been agreed on at Nicolausberg. A despatch in cipher, to be transmitted to the Prussian commander-in-chief, accompanied this telegram.

This despatch was instantly conveyed to General v. Manteuffel by the Prussian colonel charged to accompany General v. der Tann. It bore date the 28th of July, 5 A.M., and, on being deciphered, ran as follows: 'On the 24th, preliminaries of peace with Austria signed. Suspension of arms with Bavaria also agreed upon from 2nd of August. Telegram in conformity herewith, as well as a messenger on the road viâ Berlin.'

The 8th corps was either forgotten or purposely excluded from all mention, and in his farther negotiations with the Prussian general-in-chief, Prince Charles treated for Bavaria alone.

As soon as the contents of the despatch became known, General v. Manteuffel communicated them at Bavarian head-quarters, and after some parley a pro-

visional truce was agreed upon, including cessation of work upon the Prussian batteries until further arrangements, with mutual notice twenty-four hours before recommencing hostilities. The weather had become rainy and bad, and both armies gladly took up quarters, in which their men, who were almost wholly unprovided with camp equipage, found welcome shelter.

General v. Manteuffel used the interval skilfully, and by the apprehension he inspired on the one hand, by not recognising any armistice as subsisting between Prussia and the 8th corps, as well as by threatening to put an end to the armistice with the 7th, finally gained free entry into Wurzburg on August 2, and the suspension of arms was definitively signed at the Bavarian head-quarters in Kitzingen on the evening of that day. By the line of demar- August 2.
cation which was agreed upon, Manteuffel secured possession of the high road leading to Wurtemburg, by way of Giebelstadt and Mergentheim.

The General had in the interval received a telegram of earlier date than that of the 28th on which he had at first acted. By the anterior orders thereby conveyed he was authorised to grant suspensions of arms to Wurtemburg, Hesse-Darmstadt, and Baden but not to the northern States—*i.e.* to Nassau, Hesse-Cassel, or Hanover—if asked for on their behalf.

This telegram also said that, in view of the coming negotiations, as much extent of country as possible

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was to be occupied, and that this was to include Wurtemburg territory, but the General was enjoined to avoid further serious encounters as much as possible.

On the Upper Main, at this period, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, in his march towards Nürnberg, had reached Hof on July 28. His corps was about to advance upon Bayreuth when they encountered some Bavarian troops, and had an unimportant night skirmish. The Bavarians protested against the occupation of Bayreuth, on the ground of an armistice having been concluded, but the Grand Duke, taking no account of these protests, supported as they were by no adequate force, pushed forward. Overcoming the feeble resistance opposed to him, and making some prisoners, but with trifling loss, none being killed and only one officer and fourteen men wounded on the Prussian side, his troops entered Nürnberg on August 1.*

On July 30, Prince William of Baden took the first step for breaking up the 8th army corps, by writing to the Prussian commander-in-chief that, in consequence of direct negotiations between the Grand Duke of Baden and the King of Prussia, the King had consented to the unimpeded return of the Baden troops to their country. General v. Manteuffel was without orders relating to this matter; but, under the peculiar circumstances of the case, he gave assent to the departure of this division, pre-

* *Vide* note, p. 323.

scribing their line of march, and exacting the engagement that no Baden troops should be detached northward of Carlsruhe.

On the Upper Main, before acceding to an armistice, on August 2 the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg put his troops in occupation of Nürnberg, Erlangen, Fürth, and Schwabach. On the same day a suspension of arms was agreed upon by General Manteuffel with Wurtemburg and Hesse-Darmstadt. In the convention with the former State, the immediate evacuation of the Principalities of Hohenzollern, which the Wurtemburg Government had occupied, was stipulated.

In following out his instructions to possess himself of hostile territory, General Manteuffel had sent orders to Frankfort to detach troops thence, for the occupation of Darmstadt, Heidelberg, and Mannheim, by the evening of August 1. Two battalions of Flies's division were sent to Frankfort to replace the troops detached for this service, besides which two battalions of Hamburg troops, and a battalion from Lübeck, had joined the Prussian army.

General v. Goeben was at the same time ordered to advance from Mergentheim, with all possible speed, and to occupy a portion of Wurtemburg.

The Austrian division, under Count Neipperg, began their march homewards on July 30. The Wurtemburg troops moved towards their own territory on August 7, those of Hesse-Darmstadt on the

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8th. The Bavarians, who had never left their own realm, went into widely dislocated cantonments.

All signs of hostility ceased, though peace was not yet formally established; and the Prussians in their widely extended occupation of the land, which reached even beyond the course of the Neckar, without molestation, held everywhere undisputed possession of those material pledges which diplomacy was about to make serviceable towards enforcing the demands of the victorious northern Power.

The accomplished strategy on one side, and the singular want of it on the other, have been so amply commented on, in the course of the narrative of this campaign of Prussia against coalesced Southern Germany, that a special recapitulation of events is unnecessary. No reader of the story of this war can have failed to see how fully the event justified M. de Bismarck's charges against the Federal military constitution. Flagrant proof had been given that it was as inefficient for its own maintenance against intestine disturbance as it would doubtless have proved had it been put to the severer test of foreign aggression. Hanover and Electoral Hesse were, so to say, surprised and disarmed. But Bavaria, Wurtemburg, Darmstadt, Baden, and Nassau held together to the last, and, aided by 10,000 Austrians, brought nearly double the force into the field to that which Prussia could oppose to them, and nevertheless made a lamentable military *fiasco*. The

conduct of each military chief has been narrated with the anxious desire to be strictly veracious. On the statements therefore contained in these pages—the generals in this war, their capacity, their honour, their means at command, can be judged, and by their own acts they must stand or fall.

Prince Alexander of Hesse, in the journal of the campaign which his Highness published, and which is well worthy of the most serious attention, while he in no degree appeals against public opinion on the issue of the campaign, states with what unwillingness and misgiving he entered on the command assigned to him. The faulty equipment and diversity of organisation of the various contingents composing the 8th army corps as well as the deficiencies of the Federal military constitution, by authority of which the corps was assembled and himself intrusted with the command, are clearly set forth.

The Prince was not even allowed to select the members of his personal staff, his aides-de-camp and every functionary of the army being named by the various military authorities in the States whose contingents were placed under his orders. These several contingents varied in their words of command, in their system of manœuvring, in the calibre of small arms, in their artillery system. The whole body of the 8th corps presented an assemblage of troops from which excellent material might have been selected, but which would have needed far more

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time than was allowed to its chief to mould it into the homogeneity necessary for successful military action. No officer or man of the whole body, save of the Austrian division, had ever been in action, and it was twenty-six years since the corps had been assembled. What results could be hoped for from such defects in the essentials of preparation?

Before wholly quitting the battle-field to register the doings of diplomacy, it would be unpardonable in an eye-witness of some of the scenes of this campaign, and of its consequences, to omit honourable mention of the fraternity of St. John, organised for the care of the wounded. Devoted men of all classes exerted themselves nobly in this humane and highly necessary duty; for the various corps of the Confederate army were not so well provided with surgical aid as might have been desired. They visited every battle-field, and their help was freely and tenderly given, often at great personal risk. By their organised method, not only were the wounded removed from the place of action, but surgical aid and excellently arranged hospitals provided.

In Frankfort alone, at one period, more than 600 sick and wounded men of all the States engaged in the conflict were admirably tended. Airy hospitals, skilful surgery, and devoted nurses restored numbers to health, or soothed the last moments of those who were past recovery. The greater number of these men were brought down the Main, from the places

of combat on its banks, and in the Odenwald, and there is no doubt that this admirable association was instrumental in saving many valuable lives.

The soldier had done his part; and while wounds were being bound up, the hecatombs of fallen were painfully counted, with the added pang that they were victims of a contest conducted by incompetent commanders and timid Governments, and the effect —that sort of moral dishonesty which too often arises when great personal interests are at stake and delusive hopes and fears abound. The diplomatist was next called upon to still the heavings of the body politic, and to reconstruct where fire and sword had laid waste.

The humbled Southern States of Germany, with the exception of Baden, addressed themselves to France, as a mediator between them and the conquering power. Baden had good grounds for reliance on the family ties existing between the House of Hohenzollern and the Grand-Ducal family, and for believing that their State would be leniently treated.

Two despatches from the French Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Imperial diplomatic agents at Berlin and at Munich are extant, of sufficient interest to be cited. The first is addressed to M. Benedetti at Berlin, and bears date August 14, and was published in the French yellow-book of the year. It runs as follows:—

'Monsieur,—The Cabinets of South Germany, with

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the exception of that of Carlsruhe, have addressed themselves to the Imperial Government with the object of obtaining its support in the negotiations opened at Berlin.

'You are acquainted with the dispositions which we entertain towards these Courts. The Cabinet of Berlin has at various times assured us of its desire to see these States enter upon a really serious existence, along with the Northern Union. We have no ground for presuming that Prussia will not show herself conciliatory and moderate in the questions arising for re-establishment of peace with these States. You will not directly intervene in the negotiations, but will not conceal from Count Bismarck what are the personal feelings of the Emperor for those Courts which have addressed themselves to his friendly good wishes.

'Accept, &c.,

(Signed) 'DROUYN DE LHUYS.'

The second, written to the French Minister at Munich, is in these words:—

'Paris, August 23.

'M. le Vicomte,—Baron Wendland has expressed a wish to me that the Imperial Government would take fresh steps at the Court of Berlin. M. Benedetti, as I have previously acquainted you, was instructed to use our good offices in support of Baron v. der Pfordten, and I am already assured that he has ac-

quitted himself of this instruction, in the most friendly manner, in favour of the Bavarian Government.

'I have nevertheless acceded to the wish of Baron v. Wendland, and have again reminded the Imperial ambassador, by telegraph, of the interest which His Imperial Majesty entertains for the Court of Bavaria.

'From intelligence received from Berlin, I gather that our first exertions have not remained without effect.

'I am rejoiced that our last steps have, in like manner, not been without influence on a final good result, which declares itself in a more favourable manner than the Cabinet of Munich had at first hoped.

'Accept, &c.,
(Signed) 'DROUYN DE LHUYS.'

Peace was first signed with Wurtemburg, and the convention bears date the 13th of August. A war contribution of 8,000,000 florins was imposed on this State, or somewhat less than seven hundred thousand pounds sterling.

Baden was the next to obtain settlement of her difference, at the cost of 6,000,000 florins or 500,000*l.* Neither of these States was required to make any cession of territory.

With the Munich Cabinet the negotiation was far more difficult. Prussia at first demanded considerable territorial acquisitions, viz. the portion of her former

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provinces of Ansbach and Bayreuth, lying to the right of the Main. Meantime arose the question of French demands on Prussia; and, unwilling to drive Bavaria into the arms of a possible enemy, the Berlin Cabinet finally accepted cession of the small district containing the towns of Gersfeld and Orb, with about 34,000 inhabitants, and 30,000,000 florins, equivalent to 2,500,000*l.* of English money, as war costs.

Hesse-Darmstadt was proportionately fined more heavily than her confederates, as this little State lost her most fertile province of Upper Hesse, together with the landgraviate of Hesse-Homburg, which had but recently fallen to her by inheritance, and had to pay 3,000,000 florins, equal to 250,000*l.*, war costs.

Prussia, moreover, obtained the faculty of sharing the right of garrison in Mayence, one of the most important fortresses on the Rhine, capable in its present state of holding 20,000 men, and susceptible of being vastly strengthened and enlarged.

It was not, however, until the spring of 1867 that the most important of the conventions concluded between Prussia and the Southern States at this crisis became known.

This secret treaty was identical in its provisions, and was concluded with the four States of Bavaria, Wurtemburg, Baden, and Hesse-Darmstadt. It was, in its fullest sense, an offensive and defensive alliance

with each of them, with the peculiar feature of placing the whole military force of each State under the orders of the King of Prussia in case of war.

This important secret treaty is worded as follows; and the text, as concluded with Bavaria, will suffice for all :—

'ARTICLE 1. A defensive and offensive alliance is hereby concluded between their Majesties the Kings of Prussia and of Bavaria.

'The high contracting parties mutually guarantee to each other the integrity of their respective territories, and bind themselves in case of war to place the whole of their forces at the disposal of each other.

'ARTICLE 2. His Majesty the King of Bavaria engages himself, the case arising, to transfer the command of his troops to the King of Prussia.

'ARTICLE 3. The high contracting parties bind themselves for the present to keep this treaty secret.

'ARTICLE 4. Ratification of this treaty is to take place simultaneously with that of the treaty of peace signed this day, consequently not later than the 3rd of next month. In faith whereof the beforenamed plenipotentiaries have signed the same in double expedition, and affixed their seals thereto, this 22nd day of August, at Berlin, in the year 1866.

(L. S.) 'FREIHERR VON DER PFORDTEN.

(L. S.) 'GRAF VON BRAY-STEINBURG.'

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The world in general was only made acquainted with the existence of this treaty when the difference between France and Prussia concerning Luxemburg bore so threatening an aspect in the spring of 1867. The sensation which it produced was considerable throughout Europe. The actual value of such a convention at once became a subject of much discussion, and the prevalent opinion was that the Southern States had the best of the bargain. They were not obliged by the treaty to maintain any fixed quota of military establishment, but left in perfect freedom to allow their armed force to sink to any degree of weakness, yet Prussia was bound to be their sword and shield. The frontier also which might have to be defended was of great extent and weak, whereas that of Prussia alone was comparatively restricted and easily defensible. So much also of prerogative was left to the separate sovereignties, that they would have the right of deciding upon the *casus fœderis* as well as upon the *casus belli*; and unless this last was one which carried with it popular sympathies, as well as governmental assent, the treaty would prove not worth more than the paper upon which it was written. The recent campaign had furnished the clearest evidence of the inefficiency of a commandership-in-chief established by right of treaty.

Only when unity of government as well as unity of command is established, will it become a certainty

that the entire military force of Germany will never act but for a common object, nor the house be divided against itself.

Although the course of this narrative has been almost wholly confined to details of the war in Southern Germany, it is not possible to omit reference to the treaty made with Austria in bringing the record to conclusion.

The peace agreed on at Nicolausberg was signed at Prague, and ratified on the 30th of July. The dissolution of the Germanic Confederation was thereby recognised, and Austria, engaging to abstain from all interference in the reconstruction of Germany, gave her assent beforehand to all such territorial changes as Prussia saw fit to make, on the sole condition that Saxony should remain intact. Austria likewise ceded all pretensions to condominate right with Prussia in the Elbe Duchies, stipulating, however, that North Schleswig should be entitled to vote upon the question of eventual re-union with Denmark.

Saxony, it was decided, should be united to the North German Confederation; and special arrangements as to the army, the police, and post office were made with that Government, which left King John few remains of independence or royal prerogative, excepting the right of imposing taxes on his subjects.

Prussia took possession of Hanover, of Electoral

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Hesse, Nassau, and the formerly free city of Frankfort-on-Main, as well as of Schleswig and Holstein, besides the territorial cessions made by Bavaria and Grand-Ducal Hesse, in full sovereignty; and here it may be remarked that, in spite of many remonstrances, the article of the Treaty of Prague relating to the vote of North Schleswig for reunion with Denmark remains to this day unexecuted.

M. de Bismarck, now created a Count, had indeed accomplished great things; he had realised the project, which most men thought more than chimerical, of expelling Austria from Germany. He had pulled down the crumbling edifice of the Germanic Confederation, and was about to remodel the Fatherland. Many will think that the time was ripe that a root-and-branch revolution should overthrow a state of things no longer adapted to the wants of the German people.

It should, however, and will be noted by the historian that these institutions were framed with a view to two great objects—the maintenance of the internal tranquillity of Germany, and the holding France in check; and, that with the brief exception of the troubles of 1848–9, both objects were secured for half a century. During that period neither Austria nor Prussia made attacks on their confederates; above all, France made no encroachments, nor was any umbrage given to her, at periods when that country was most ready to take umbrage.

The Germanic Confederation was respected alike by Louis XVIII., by Charles X., by the short-lived republic, and by Louis Philippe. Even after Solferino the resumption of the Rhine frontier may have been talked of, but was never seriously contemplated. An area of 11,000 geographical miles, and a population of forty-five millions on her immediate confines, remained in the peaceful pursuit of industrial progress; and France had good reason to know that any aggressive move in that direction stirred the great soul of Germany like that of one man. That this result was obtained while the Diet still subsisted, cannot be forgotten by any one who impartially records the events of the time.

Perhaps, however, the most remarkable exploit in the whole career of M. de Bismarck was, that, after all his successes, he still maintained peace with France—a fact which, had it been prophesied, would have seemed incredible to those who are versed in the jealousies agitating that country and Europe at this critical period.

He had well chosen his time. The humiliation of Austria—unexpected, yet not wholly unwelcome—caused serious reflexion on the hazard of trying issues with the Power which had done so much; and France, which had been only too willing to allow the trial of strength between the northern Power and the empire of the House of Hapsburg, awoke one day to find that she had made an irreparable mistake.

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Whether the precise mode in which the overthrow of the Germanic Confederation was brought about was the only, or even the best means by which the needed radical cure could be effected, is an open question.

At all events the unity of military command which has been the proximate result, and the confirmation and extension of the Customs Union, open very different prospects for the future of Germany from any which that ill-knit congeries of tribes could possibly have looked for while fractioned and divided as they came forth from the alembic of the Congress of Vienna. Assuredly he who has been the main instrument of this great change deserves well of his own country! It may be that close scrutiny of means detects faults in the course by which the end was attained, and many will judge that Prussian policy was often tortuous, and that less blood and less iron needed to have been expended in cementing the new fabric; but there stands the remodelled kingdom, compact, majestic, admirably organised, honestly and economically administered, seemingly unattackable.

With ample reason may the renovated kingdom of Prussia inscribe on her banner the grand device, 'Nemo me impune lacessit;' while every man among her subjects has the satisfaction of feeling that, when his country speaks, her voice will have due weight in the counsels of Europe.

All the world may sympathise with the King of

Hanover and the other dispossessed sovereigns, pity the unmerited sufferings of the free city of Frankfort, and commiserate all who have been losers in a great revolution like that which Germany underwent in 1866. Certain acts of doubtful moral rectitude, done in pursuit of a great and generally admitted laudable object, may and will be censured; yet, if we look to what Germany was, and what has been accomplished within her limits, it is impossible to withhold admiration from the clear perception which shaped events, difficult to withhold approval from the result obtained; nor does it seem possible for even his bitterest enemies to avoid admitting that M. de Bismarck takes rank among the ablest men of the age.

Prussia was not illiberal to the King of Hanover, or to the other princes whose States were annexed. To King George was allotted an appanage of nearly one million sterling, but this sum was to be paid in exchange for cession of his rights, and that cession His Majesty has never been willing to make. The Prussian Government therefore holds the allowance, as well as other private property of His Majesty under sequestration, and has even essayed to gain possession, by process of law, of certain funds which were remitted by the King to England, under the plea of their being Hanoverian state property. In this attempt, however, the Prussian Government failed.

The Elector of Hesse had allowed him a sum

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exceeding 700,000*l.*, and the palace of Hanau. His Royal Highness also suffered under sequestration of his allowance for a time, but subsequently found it expedient to yield to the exigencies of the Prussian Government, and now receives the sums allotted to him.

The Duke of Nassau was allotted 7,000,000 florins, nearly 600,000*l.*, with the palace of Bieberich; and, complying with Prussia's demands in the matter of ceding his sovereign rights, has had no retention of the sums assigned to his Highness to complain of.

The ancient free city of Frankfort obtained, by special favour of the King of Prussia, reimbursement of a portion of the contribution which was exacted; but the Government is abolished, and the city is reduced to a Prussian town of the third rank.

# CHAPTER XXVI.

## THE PRUSSIAN ARMY.



EUROPE not having yet arrived at that idyllic state in which wars are to cease; while the problem of keeping the largest force on foot, with least possible subtraction from the productive energies of the state, is that which all modern Continental States strive to solve; and Prussia having apparently effected this object in a more perfect manner than any other country—it can hardly be otherwise than a profitable study to enquire into such details of a system which has produced these great results, as may interest the general reader.

A rigorous conscription was imposed upon the country and accepted without murmur, after what was called the war of liberation, ending in 1813. The events of 1815, though they again called the nation to arms, scarcely sufficed to test the efficiency of the new organisation, and it was not till the Baden campaign in 1849, and the experience gained at the cost of much-wronged Denmark in 1863–4, that the merits and defects of Scharnhorst's system were really put to the test.

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The knowledge thus gained led to considerable modifications and improvements, and as far as mere organisation can render an army perfect, it seems to be generally accepted that Prussia has reached the acme of perfection attainable by human institutions of the kind. Of this we have conclusive proof in the fact that her system is being more or less copied by all the other military Powers of Continental Europe.

Conscription for the regular army, from which no man is excepted (save those hereafter specified), unless for bodily infirmity, originally went hand-in-hand with the institution of the Landwehr. From the age of seventeen to forty, those who did not volunteer were compelled to serve; and men and boys, not included either in the standing army or Landwehr, *i. e.* boys of fifteen and men up to sixty years of age, were enrolled in the Landsturm, in which even women and children were to be employed as scouts and messengers.

The whole male population, in short, with the exception of the few princely families mediatised at the Congress of Vienna, was bound to personal military service. These families are few in number in Prussia, and they owe exemption to international treaties.

The system of allowing substitutes, which has crept into the armies of almost every other State raised by conscription, is altogether forbidden in Prussia. Only by the entrance of the upper classes

into the army was it possible to form a corps of officers for the Landwehr, as the maintenance of a sufficient establishment exceptionally for that branch of the organisation would have been impossible on financial grounds, and prejudicial to efficiency. Experience also soon showed that officers' duties were best discharged by men of birth and education, not only from the tone and stamp of higher moral feeling with which they leavened the mass, but from the fact that men of cultivated mind more rapidly acquired the knowledge of their duties, and found a readier submission and obedience from classes of men accustomed to regard them as their natural superiors. Volunteers obtain certain advantages in the shortening of their term of service in the regular army to one year.

This does not free the volunteer from all service, but is regarded as the schooling which qualifies him for an officer's post in the Landwehr, and is generally found sufficient after he has for a short period discharged officer's duty in a line regiment. The higher commands in the Landwehr are given to selected officers of the regular army.

By the constitution of the Prussian army, embracing as it does every class of the people, it would seem that a national, as well as a military, spirit must pervade and animate it.

It would be hazardous to employ such an army for purely dynastic objects, or indeed for any which

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the public feeling of the nation did not cordially support. Backed by that sentiment, the administration might launch forth with security on the most adventurous undertakings.

The highly valuable element which the French call *esprit de corps*, is nowhere better understood or maintained than in the Prussian army. Each regiment is indeed localised, and has its own peculiar recruiting district, and its own Landwehr, wherein serve the time-expired men of the line regiments and of the Guard.

The Landwehr is divided into a first and second levy. The recruit serves three years in the regular army, two more years in the reserve. He then belongs to the first levy of the Landwehr for seven years, and to the second levy for a like period. Taken thus, as is now the law, at the age of twenty, the state claims the military service of every citizen for nineteen years, and leaves him practically liberated in his fortieth year; for the Landsturm is a service that invasion alone would call into existence.

In war, the Landwehr and line regiments were by the old regulations brigaded together.

During peace, the Landwehr infantry regiments maintained small cadres, amounting for the whole army to about 3,000 men; all others were on furlough, and only assembled once in every two years for some weeks' training. The cavalry of the line was always maintained in considerable propor-

tionate strength; the Landwehr of this arm kept up relatively weaker cadres than the infantry. The number of recruits levied yearly previous to the recent reforms, was 40,000, and with this levy the numerical strength of standing army reserve and first and second Landwehr levies would have been 760,000. Under the old system, the whole army strength was reckoned at only 460,000, exclusive of recruits, who in case of mobilisation would have been first raised for the reserve, so that the grand total suffers deductions, which will come under the heads of death, illness, emigration, and deformities, amounting to nearly three-sevenths on the census returns of the kingdom.

In 1859, important changes of organisation were proposed:—

1st. By augmenting the yearly levy of recruits by 23,000 men.

2ndly. The cadres of the line regiments were reduced from 22 officers, 70 under-officers, and 492 men per battalion, to 18 officers, 54 under-officers, and 460 men. The number of the regiments of infantry was doubled. By this change the whole of the Landwehr could be used as reserve, and the active force for the field consisted exclusively of the standing army.

As the augmentation of recruits had been only about 50 per cent., while the infantry regiments had been doubled in number, it became of the most urgent

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necessity to augment the Landwehr and the reserve. The former could not at once be maintained in proportionate strength by the men discharged from the line reserve after their four or five years' service; it was therefore necessary either to prolong the service of the reserve men for two additional years, or to take the men of the two most recent years' service in the Landwehr to complete the standing army.

It was at the same time proposed that the cavalry should be greatly reformed.

The first project was to abolish the Landwehr cavalry altogether, excepting the garrison detachments, and to create eighteen new cavalry line regiments with four years' service. Lastly, the artillery was to undergo material changes, though in this arm it did not affect the Landwehr system, the artillery having been connected only with the two-year reservists.

In carrying out these alterations of system, the Government and the representatives of the nation came into violent conflict.

Without previous assent by the Chambers, the Government proceeded to double the number of the infantry regiments, to create ten new regiments of cavalry, to augment the strength of the light infantry, rifle, and pioneer battalions, but not quite doubling the strength of these last. This important increase of establishment, which the Government called 'augmented preparation for war,' was carried

out in the interim of change from mobilisation to the ordinary peace footing between 1859 and 1860. Regarding it as a transitory measure, the Chambers at first granted funds, but when they found that the Government meant it to be permanent, they obstinately refused to sanction the system, and the constitutional conflict assumed a serious aspect. The Government, resolved to persevere, governed without a budget, and M. de Bismarck showed that he had little respect for constitutional forms, and was determined on maintaining, by absolute means and at all hazards, institutions which, in his own opinion, were for the good of the country.

The struggle was long and obstinate. Formal right was against the Government; but it admits of no doubt that the principles on which the chief alterations in the army organisation were based are sound and practical, as was abundantly proved in the campaign of 1866.

This is especially the case on the point of severance between line and Landwehr, between army and people, which was most offensive to the Liberal ideologists, of whom the Opposition in the second Chamber was mainly composed.

Increased charges were legitimate matters for scrutiny and objection, and the enhanced costs of augmented recruitment, as well as those of the more numerous officers and under-officers, were warmly canvassed. From a strength of 130,000 on the

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peace establishment, the numerical force had been at once raised to more than 210,000, and, when fully in operation, the new system would give a complement of 230,000 men.

The effect which such a proportionate subtraction from the productive forces of the country might produce was held to be a serious objection, on principles of national economy; and on this ground great efforts were made to reduce the time of service from three to two years. This principle found many and warm supporters, and even among military men had numerous advocates. One of these, General Krauseneck, with his recent experience of the Austrian campaign, in which he held the important post of Chief of the Staff, reasoned in favour of the two years' service, and, among other grounds, asserted that a man of ordinary intelligence can learn in eighteen or twenty months all that is requisite for an infantry soldier to know, and said that, in the European wars of the last forty years, young recruits have, as a rule, better answered the requirements of war than old soldiers.

On the other side it was argued that the introduction of the breech-loading arm, and the increased complication of manœuvres—especially in intelligent skirmishing, which is now required to be mastered, every man being converted into a rifleman—make it impossible for the raw recruit to become a thorough soldier under three years' severe training. The

authorities for either theory may be considered as balanced, but the Prussian Government hold to the three years' presence under arms. That this period is maintained is mainly ascribed to the King's personal opinion, and that the longer period is the more practical of the two systems seems to be generally acknowledged.

Although in this chapter I have wished only to give the details of the organisation and strength of the Prussian military force in the least technical manner, the reader will not find it wearisome to see the words spoken by General v. Moltcke himself, in maintaining the desirableness of a three years' presence with the colours, when the subject came under debate in the Chambers in 1867. The General spoke thus:—

'During the last year, we made some 50,000 prisoners. Our own loss in missing amounted, on the other hand, only to 3,000 men, of whom probably but a small proportion were taken prisoners. How are we to account for this enormous difference? I can only ascribe it to the duration of service. Financial necessities had driven Austria to a system under which the infantry soldier was ordinarily fifteen or eighteen months in the service. These men fought gallantly, and I cannot help remarking that their officers set them the noblest example, and that the Austrians lost a large proportion of officers. But under difficult circum-

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stances discipline was relaxed, and in combats in villages, or in woodland, the men were taken prisoners in swarms. On our side, we heard everywhere the cry: "Where is the captain? what said the captain as to where we should go?" This instinct of hanging together under all circumstances cannot be *drilled* into a man; it must be the *habit* of his life.'*

As to the importance of a numerous body of officers, the General stated that, whereas the Prussian troops, on the full war establishment, counted one officer to every fifty men, the return of losses gave one officer for every twenty men.

The new organisation of the standing army rendered it necessary, in case of mobilisation, only to call up the Landwehr men under and up to twenty-seven years of age. Unless, therefore, it was for a war of great dimensions, the greater portion of the married men would be spared serving, or, as was the case in the late war with Austria, would act wholly as reserve.

The re-organisation, moreover, while maintaining the Landwehr in its numerical force, made it possible to abbreviate their term of service—an advantage which those whom it affected most nearly are not slow to appreciate.

* It is impossible to give the force of the German compound words *einexercirt* and *eingelebt*, by the necessarily periphrastic rendering of our tongue.

The severance from the standing army was, however, the most important amelioration. When the standing army consisted of 300,000, and a like number of the Landwehr were incorporated with them, so that men up to thirty-two years of age had to form the line of battle, numbers of married men, with established habits of life, must have run the same risk as the youngest recruit. It was proved in the war of 1866 that the necessity for bringing these elder men into action seldom occurred. They performed duties which, had this severance not taken place, would have detracted largely from the force of the regulars; and it is an ascertained fact that such efforts as are required from troops in warfare are more easily supported by men who are within the ages of from twenty to thirty-five.

Other considerations, which are rather of the politico-œconomical than the purely military character, prove the great advantage of this separation of the Landwehr from the standing army, not the least essential of these benefits being the practicability of abstaining, even in so great a war as that with Austria, from calling out the whole of this force.

The opposition of the Chambers to the army reforms had this effect, that, when the war broke out, the Government could not only legally dispose of their entire augmented regular force, but also of the whole of the Landwehr of both levies. Thus, although the yearly augmentation of 23,000 recruits

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for the standing army, operating since 1859, had not yet produced its full effect in 1866, still it placed the notable additional force of 150,000 young and thoroughly drilled soldiers at the disposal of the Government and enabled them to dispense with a considerable portion of the Landwehr liable to service. At the same time the distinction of the first and second levy was not strictly adhered to, but a fusion of the two classes, which proved itself highly advantageous in practice, was boldly made by the able administrators of the army. We arrive, then, at the following estimate :—

The numerical strength of which Prussia disposed when she entered on the war of 1866, with her population of nineteen millions, and which astonished Europe, amounted in round numbers to—

| | Men |
|---|---|
| 1. Twelve yearly series of recruits of 40,000 men, minus 25 per cent. for casualties of all kinds . . . . . | 360,000 |
| 2. Seven yearly series of recruits of 63,000 men, minus 12½ per cent. for casualties, about . . . . . | 386,000 |
| Total . . . . | 746,000 |

Say nearly three-quarters of a million of well-trained effectives, actually enregimented, every man knowing his place and immediately disposable.

The Administration (as has been said), at the King's special desire, arranged to call out no more yearly series men than were actually liable under the reform.

The only exception was for the artillery in the fortresses, which was found to be short of hands. Under this arrangement, the men of the 17th, 18th, and 19th years' service were left at home. As these years were, in the course of nature, the most thinned, supplying probably not more than 20,000 men each, the total amount of force of which Prussia could dispose may be taken in round numbers at 686,000 men of all arms.

The youngest recruit had entered in October 1865, and had therefore undergone eight months' training, when the whole army was put upon the war establishment in May 1866.

Besides this force, a revision of those who, from various causes, had escaped the conscription of former years, and a lowering of the standard height, were ordered. These measures produced an extraordinary reserve, amounting to the respectable number of 150,000 men. Whilst many of these were embodied with the first levy of the Landwehr, all were men who would have been turned to account had the war been of longer duration. For garrison duty, for holding conquered territory, or as reserves for the army in the field, such troops speedily become serviceable, while the Prussian Landwehr formation readily supplied drill serjeants and subaltern officers, facilitating in a remarkable manner these new formations for which, in most other States, it would have been very difficult to provide.

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In these newly formed battalions, the military administration exercised the unlimited right of appointment, recognising no individual claims as giving titles to preference, but disposing of those whom it deemed fit for employment entirely at its own discretion; and the necessary elements were selected indifferently from the reserve or from the 1st or 2nd levy of the Landwehr.

The guiding principle was, that the younger men should stand the brunt of action, as well as of all the hard work of warfare; and that the reserves, *i. e.* the two-year reservists and the Landwehr, should be used only in the way implied by their designation; in other words, in the last necessity.

Much has been said in the course of the foregoing narrative of the perfect reliance felt by the Prussian Government on the perfection and rapid action of their army organisation, and on the fact that, although M. de Bismarck, for political reasons, threw upon Austria the blame of provoking war by anticipatory preparations, he was well aware that no forces which his antagonist could put on foot would equal those which Prussia could array against her within an incredibly short period, when once the order for mobilisation was issued.

Let us now see the practical working of the system. The orders for mobilising were despatched from the 5th to the 8th of May. By the 5th of June, eight army corps and a half stood in order of

battle on the Saxon and Silesian frontiers; the other half army corps, and the detached corps in the Elbe Duchies, were similarly on the war footing.

The army corps numbers 36,000 combatants, and is thus composed :—

| | Men |
|---|---|
| 1. Two divisions of infantry, each formed of two brigades; the brigade of two regiments of three battalions. One of these divisions has attached to it a fusilier battalion, the other a jäger, or light infantry, battalion. The infantry of a division may be reckoned at from 13,000 to 15,000 men;—two divisions, say . | 28,000 |
| 2. One division of cavalry, four to five regiments, with a battery of horse artillery . . | 2,700 |
| 3. One regiment of artillery, including the divisional battery. Three battalions of foot, each of three batteries. One regiment of horse artillery of four batteries. Nine sections of ammunition waggons. The artillery of a division counts 108 guns, 480 train carriages, 3,860 horses, and . . . . . | 4,700 |
| 4. One pioneer battalion . . . | 600 |
| Combatants . . . . | 36,000 |
| The Guard reckons an extra rifle battalion and eight regiments of cavalry, numbering nearly | 40,000 |
| The eight provisional army corps, at 36,000 each | 288,000 |
| Total strength of first army . . | 328,000 |

No Landwehr troops enter into this enumeration; but in the infantry, the last year's men of the Landwehr entered in place of the missing men of the reserve. A certain proportion of older Landwehr men were enrolled in the artillery and in the train, rendered necessary by the recent changes in the

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establishment of this arm. The immense proportionate strength of this important branch of the service will be at once visible when it is known that they supplied a proportion of three guns to every thousand men.*

So perfect is the organisation for assembling the troops that the authorities intrusted with this duty found it easier to get them together at once than gradually.

A telegraphic signal from head-quarters put the whole machinery in operation at once. In the Landwehr offices of every village the summonses for assembly lie constantly ready, and have only to be distributed. Every individual attached to the commissariat, the hospitals, or field post-offices, or any other employ, in case of war, knows his destination beforehand, and only requires notice to present himself.

Horses are all registered, and the locality where they are to be delivered is designated. If the assembly is to be gradual, several separate and special warnings must necessarily be given. The experience of 1866 fully tested and proved the perfection of the organisation.

It was on May 3 that the artillery got the order for being put on the complete war establishment. This arm, as is well known, requires considerable

* The proportion of rifled guns to smooth-bore, in 1866, was 96 of the former to 36 of the latter.

preparation; yet within four weeks the entire force, with its attendant train, was in marching order.

The assembly of the Landwehr was not necessarily so pressing as that of the line. The garrison and other duties assigned to them did not suffer by some delay, and the new organisation allowed of the men being left for a longer period at their homes.

They proved eminently serviceable when called out, and not only kept the army in the field up to its full strength, but left no need of detaching a man for those duties which were well and amply discharged by this copious reserve.

During the progress of the campaign, fourth battalions of 1,000 men each were formed for the eighty-one line regiments. These were made up of one-third Landwehr men of the first series, men of the regiment who, from sickness or other causes, had not joined, men of the revision list, and a proportion of volunteers and recruits; and they were mostly employed in occupation of territory and garrison duty.

For service in the province of Posen and in Silesia, Landwehr battalions were organised for garrison duty in the menaced fortresses earlier than elsewhere. They were tactically attached to the 5th and 6th army corps, 802 men in strength per battalion, and, entering Saxony, formed the first corps of the reserve.

These were the Guard Landwehr battalions of

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Pomerania and Westphalia, and were selected, on account of their peculiarly high soldierly qualities, as specially adapted for service in the field. Nearly all other Landwehr battalions, being exclusively required for garrison duty, were formed at the strength of only 500 men per battalion.

Of the Landwehr cavalry, only twelve regiments were called out. The organisation could have furnished three times that number.

The offensive character of the war, and continual successful advance of the Prussian armies, rendered it necessary to occupy extensive tracts of territory, and for this purpose the reserves and Landwehr were especially adapted. They thus also found time and occasion for completing their own discipline, whilst they performed the essential duties of keeping up communications and holding all points that were in any degree menaced—important services which must have been discharged by detaching men from the regular army in the field unless these troops had been available. They were so near the field of action that they morally participated in the triumphs of their younger brethren in arms, and had the consciousness that on them the honour of acting in support would devolve.

After the first remarkable, and almost wholly successful, encounters in Bohemia, and when it was deemed necessary to make a powerful and supreme effort, from the eighty-one relief battalions which

the several regiments of the line form on completing its war establishment, forty-eight were selected for active service. These battalions were actually mobilised at the rate of 800 men each, leaving a dêpot of 200 men, and some of these battalions came into action. Their composition has been already mentioned in detail. The exceptional circumstances which justified this employment of Landwehr men of both series cannot be held to impair the principle on which that institution is based.

A battalion of Jägers and some regiments of Landwehr cavalry were likewise formed, on the same principle, as reserve; and a similar augmentation of the artillery was begun when the war approached its end.

According to the high authority of General v. Moltcke, in a speech made in the Chamber of the North German Union, the grand total of men called to arms was 664,000.

The computation of the Austrian staff gives 2,000 more, an insignificant discrepancy in dealing with such masses; but we may well accept as an undoubted fact that Prussia had actually on foot more than 600,000 well-drilled and organised troops.

Of the high military qualities of the Prussian troops there never was any question or doubt. The wars of a former century, under the great Frederick, founded for them a reputation which not even the disaster of such a day as Jena could seriously injure,

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and which the energy of the people speedily re-established.

The school of adversity was nobly turned to profit, and the actual military organisation of this now compact kingdom is second to none in Europe.

The superiority of the armament of her infantry, and the diversion of a large part of the strength of Austria to make head against Italy, placed Prussia, in the campaign of 1866, in a position of peculiar advantage.

The skill of her commanders was admirably seconded by the courage and endurance of the soldiery; and a great social and political revolution was accomplished—by violence, it is true, but regulated and controlled in its results in such degree that the political philosopher and the philanthropist may contemplate the altered map of Europe with good hope for the future well-being of its inhabitants.

In what has gone before, the tactical ordering of the Prussian people for the exigencies of military service has alone been considered. The transformation of a whole nation into one vast machine—for such is the Prussian army—is no slight triumph of intelligence, and is worthy of all admiration; but the component parts of this human mechanism deserve some examination, as well as the manner in which it is put together. The perfection with which it works has already passed under review.

The Prussian soldier, to the eye of an English disciplinarian, is far from perfect. Even in the Guard, composed of picked men, the youthful look of the majority of the rank and file, and their not being what we call well set-up, strike even non-military men. See them at drill, and you will observe that nearly every movement is executed with smartness and precision, and, though there may be something individually slovenly, the essentials of steadiness and accuracy of formation offer little to cavil at. In squad and company drill and in gymnastics, which are carefully attended to, the subaltern officers and captains invariably discharge duties left in the English army to the under-officers. By this system men and officers become more familiarised with each other, and this is immensely in favour of the Prussian system, in the wear and tear of actual service.

The *physique* as well as the *morale* of the Prussian soldier varies considerably, according to the district of which he is a native. The men of the north are more robust in frame and sedate in disposition; those of the western, especially of the Rhenish provinces, rather undersized and less well-built, as well as more volatile in character; though, even here, now and then crop up stalwart vigorous natures, in whose formation ethnologists say that the Teutonic and Frankish elements have been well amalgamated.

The Prussian soldier is intelligent, sober, somewhat phlegmatic, hardy—with a steady courage,

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but less of what the French call *élan*—quick in appreciation of the relative merits of his officers, but orderly and obedient to discipline. The officers are highly educated, attentive to the discipline and comforts of their men; but, as many of them look on the profession of arms as transitory, the whole body has less cohesion than in most other services, where the officer has absolutely no future to look to beyond his military prospects. A certain stiffness and military pedantry mark their social relations with each other, while there is less of distance between the officer and under-officer or soldier than with us. No subaltern ever appears to forget his inferiority, no general his superiority in the military hierarchy; but duty is well and earnestly carried on, and the State is efficiently served.

A great advantage accrues to the Prussian army from the fact that the country supplies horses in sufficiency for every branch of the service. Of these, as of the men, the local authorities, in every hamlet, keep a register, and the requisite number is called for as the demand arises. If required for remounts, or for artillery or train service, they are paid for by the State at fixed rates. Many services are only temporary, and the horses are restored to their owners after the services have been rendered.

Much has been said of the Prussian needle-gun. It is the first breech-loading arm with which a

European army has yet taken the field, and the advantages of this system have been quite sufficiently shown by the Prussian weapon to render the adoption of some similar firelock imperative on all armies whose Governments are not indifferent to mechanical progress, or to the advantages which the new method of loading gives to troops so armed over adversaries furnished with muzzle-loaders.

In the opinion of professional men, however, the needle-gun is not the most perfect weapon of this kind that has yet been produced. Accuracy in shooting cannot be much depended on with the Prussian small arm beyond 600 yards. The Snider rifle, with which the British army has recently been armed, exceeds the performance of the needle-gun, both in rapidity of fire and in range, and the Henry-Martini—reported to be our arm for the future—is in both respects superior to this latter weapon.

Reiterated reports were made to the proper War Office authorities in Vienna, before the war of 1866 began, by officers who had seen the terrible efficiency of the breech-loading system in the Schleswig-Holstein campaign, and who justly appreciated the disadvantage at which their own troops would stand if opposed to the Prussians. All were disregarded. The Solons of the Vienna War Department—who might have imbibed their warlike lore from Xenophon's Cyropædia, and probably remembered the story of the juvenile cohorts armed respectively

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with clubs and cudgels, and the triumph of the youthful club-men—replied to the remonstrants, that 'the bayonets of Austria's serried battalions would sweep away those piff-paff soldiers like dust.'* Alas! the serried battalions never came to push of bayonet; and the more serried their ranks, the more fatal was the deadly hail that stretched the brave but fated soldiers of the empire in ghastly rank and file at Podol, at Königgrätz, and on every occasion when they hopelessly attempted to close with men armed with this murderous weapon.

Even the carbines of the Prussian cavalry, made on the same principle as the arm of the infantry, and a very handy weapon when compared with any muzzle-loader, were turned to good account; for bodies of the Austrian cavalry, in more than one instance, received some rounds of their adversaries' fire which was by no means harmless, before the opposing bodies of horse came within charging distance of each other.

The Prussian artillery had not finished its entire transformation from smooth-bored muzzle-loaders to rifled breech-loaders when the war began, so that the two systems worked together—not altogether so advantageously, according to general opinion, as if the uniformity of system had been complete.

These details of the constitution of the Prussian

* A fact.

army, drawn principally from published official documents and from Blankenberg's 'History of the War of 1866,' will hardly be novelties to our military men; but opportunities of personal observation, as well as intimate acquaintance with many officers of the Prussian army, have perhaps enabled the writer to touch on some points not obvious to cursory observers.

Whilst Englishmen must perforce admire the perfection of a system which has produced such great results, we cannot but congratulate ourselves that our happy geographical position exempts us from the necessity of ever resorting to any similar military organisation. A great lesson is at the same time to be learnt. Dire necessity, national humiliation, and conquest by a foreign power forced Prussia to become what she is—the most powerfully military-ordered State of Continental Europe; for if before 1866, with 19,000,000 inhabitants, she could put, without extraordinary effort, 600,000 men on foot, it would not now cost her more exertion to add 120,000 to that number, for she has added four millions of the most warlike races of Germany to her dominions.

Yet at what a cost of personal freedom and individual independence is this national strength purchased, and how would Englishmen endure such a system? We can scarcely, however, arrive at any other conclusion than that the sacrifice of personal

CHAP. XXVI.

freedom, during twenty of the best years of every man's existence, is a cheap insurance against the horrors and degradation of foreign invasion, when we see that it is the normal life, chosen and readily submitted to by a nation like Prussia—a people more highly educated than our own, and every way ripe for liberty in its fullest sense.

# APPENDIX.

No. I.

*Extract from private letter from Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell, dated Frankfort, August* 25, 1863.

There is still a good deal of uneasiness mixed up with the hope of change for the better arising out of these conferences.

Prussia's attitude cannot but create disquietude, and though the Austrians affirm that they will go on without her, I cannot persuade myself that they duly count the cost of so doing.

Some very moderate and calmly judging men, with whom I converse on the subject, see civil war looming in the not distant future, and are anything but happy in the prospect of Austria's momentary success.

[*I added this P.S., marked* (*Quite confidential*):—]

I may add that, speaking with Count Rechberg himself on the contingency and danger of civil war arising out of this effort at reform, his Excellency did not seem by any means to have left it out of his calculations.

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No. II.

(No. 65). *Earl Russell to Lord Bloomfield.*

Foreign Office, May 27, 1863.

My Lord,—Her Majesty's Government have heard with much concern that it is in contemplation to consider in the Diet at Frankfort of a Federal execution in Holstein. Without dis-

cussing the declaration of the King of Denmark of the 30th of March, they instruct you to say that it is very desirable not to add to the existing complications and dangers of Europe.

Austria and Prussia declined in 1861 to negotiate on the affairs of Holstein without arranging those of Schleswig. But the affairs of Schleswig are matters of international concern, and should be discussed with the utmost calmness and deliberation by the Powers of Europe, and cannot be decided by the Diet of Frankfort.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

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No. III.

(*Translation.*)

Stockholm, July 19, 1863.

M. le Comte,—The political pre-occupations of a higher order which for the last few weeks have kept the minds of European Cabinets on the alert, and which have taken up all their attention, may have caused certain circumstances to pass unnoticed, which at a time of less agitation would not fail to have attracted general attention. Among the number is one to which we think it our duty to call the most serious attention of Her Majesty's Government. It relates, as may easily be supposed, to the new phase which the Danish question has entered, in consequence of the resolutions recently adopted by the Germanic Confederation, in virtue of which the Danish Government is shortly to receive (if, indeed, the communication has not already been made) a summons to recall within a term of six weeks the patent of the 30th of March last, under pain of a Federal execution in Holstein.

We are as yet ignorant of the answer which the Danish Government will give, but it seems to us impossible to doubt what will be the resolution which it will adopt. Matters have come to a point where foreign interference in the internal affairs of Denmark becomes absolutely intolerable, and where

the most extreme measures seem to it preferable to a state of constraint which nothing justifies, and to which the Danish people would in no way submit. We may therefore suppose that the Danish Government will reply that, by the patent of the 30th of May, it had granted to the Duchy of Holstein all the rights claimed in its favour by the Germanic Confederation, and that it had thus fulfilled all its Federal obligations; that having by means of this patent determined the reciprocal relations of the different parts of the monarchy in such a way that the legislation and the taxes of the other provinces should be independent of whatever may be decided for Holstein and Lauenburg, the Danish Government will always be disposed to put in execution all the resolutions which may be adopted at Frankfort, relative to the internal administration of these two Duchies; but that, since by this declaration, as well as by the privileges which by the patent of the 30th of May, were secured to Holstein, not only all ground, but also every pretext for Federal execution, were removed, the Danish Government could not regard such a measure except as having in view an end entirely beyond the competence of the Confederation, and consequently as an act of hostile aggression, which it would be its duty to oppose with all the means at its disposition.

If such were the reply of the Danish Government, and, as I have just said, it seems to me very probable, it cannot be denied that it would be founded on facts. The pretension of the Germanic Confederation to obtain for the whole monarchy a common constitution cannot be maintained; for it is the Confederation itself, and the States of Holstein, which have rendered such an arrangement impossible. As regards the Duchy of Schleswig, it is a fact that the Danish Government, after the administrative separation of Holstein, is disposed to extend the liberty of that province, and that it has never taken any steps to incorporate it in the kingdom; and, in any case, that is a question in regard to which, whatever pretensions Austria and Prussia may think themselves justified in founding on the negotiations of 1851 and 1852, the Germanic Confede-

ration is quite incompetent [to interfere.] Its ill-concealed desire to mix itself up in this question constitutes, however, the danger of the situation, which we cannot help looking upon as very critical, and as approachiug a crisis which cannot fail to compromise the peace of the north, and very probably that of the whole of Europe.

The King's Government has for a long time refrained from recurring to this question, but it does not think that it can longer keep silence; and it considers it a duty to submit the situation to the appreciation of the Cabinets of London and Paris. It appears to the Danish Government to be unlikely that it should enter into the intentions of these Cabinets, and especially in the present state of negotiations in regard to Poland, that a war should break out in the north in the course of this year; and yet this consequence might take place in a few weeks if Denmark did not find, in the support of these Cabinets, a protection against the aggressive measures of Germany. We do not permit ourselves to suggest means to prevent or to moderate its effects, but we consider that we have a right to express our opinion on this question. We found it, in the first place, on the sincere sentiments of friendship which bind us to the two Governments to which we address ourselves, and next on the grave consequences to ourselves which a conflict might bring on, into which, by the force of circumstances, we might easily be dragged into taking an active part, since our dearest interests could scarce permit us to view with a tranquil eye our neighbours crushed under pretexts which, later, might endanger our own independence.

I request you, M. le Comte, to read this despatch to Lord Russell, and if that minister should express the wish, you are authorised to furnish him with a copy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) MANDERSTRÖM.

No. IV.

(No. 189.) *Sir A. Malet to Earl Russell.*

(*Received October* 26.)

Frankfort, October 23, 1863.

My Lord,—I have the honour to enclose a note which I have received from the President of the Diet, with an enclosure, which I forward in original and translation, notifying that the Diet cannot adopt the proposal of mediation made in your Lordship's despatch of the 29th of September, addressed to myself, which by your Lordship's instructions I presented to the President of the Diet on the 1st of October to be laid before the Diet.

The conclusions of the report are in the sense my previous communications will have led your Lordship to expect. All intentions of interfering with Schleswig or with the constitution of Denmark are disavowed, but the Federal rights in respect of Holstein and Lauenburg upheld, and the right of foreign intervention in what is asserted to be a purely Federal matter is denied.

Your Lordship's friendly motives in proposing a mediation are at the same time fully recognised, and it is on this account, as the report states, that the grounds for the Diet's proceeding to execution in Holstein and Lauenburg are discussed.

Your Lordship will further see from this report that the decree of the 30th of March is by no means the only grievance intended to be rectified by the proposed extreme measure, and it may therefore be apprehended that the repeal of that decree, though now consented to by Denmark, will not of itself suffice to arrest the execution.

Still, I cannot but persuade myself that if the answer of the Copenhagen Cabinet does intimate the withdrawal of that ordonnance and willingness to treat on the other matters in dispute, the proffered good offices of Her Majesty's Government could hardly fail of contributing to an arrangement.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. MALET.

*Baron Kübeck to Sir A. Malet.*

(*Inclosure* 1 *in No.* 189. *Translation*).

Frankfort, October, 1863.

The undersigned, Austrian minister, President of the German Diet, has not failed to communicate the note of his Excellency Sir Alexander Malet, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Her Britannic Majesty to the Germanic Confederation, dated the 1st of this month—in which was enclosed the copy of a despatch from Earl Russell dated London, September 29, 1863, relating to the question of the constitution of the Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg—to the high German Diet in its sitting of the same date.

The undersigned has now the honour to lay before his Excellency the enclosed copy of the resolution which the high Federal Assembly has taken in consequence of this communication, together with the report of the committee relating to it.

The undersigned, &c.

(Signed) KÜBECK.

*Report of the Sitting of the Committee and of the 'Execution Commission' of the 29th of October, 1863, concerning the Affairs of the Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg.*

(*Inclosure* 2 *in No.* 189. *Translation.*)

In the sitting of the 1st instant a note from Sir A. Malet, &c., inclosing copy of a despatch from Earl Russell dated London, September 29, 1863, concerning the affairs of the Constitution of Holstein and Lauenburg, was laid before the Diet by the President. This note was submitted without delay to the United Committee, which will lose no time in making a Report upon it.

The note of Her Majesty's Minister is printed in the Protocol of the 29th sitting of this year, and requires no special consideration, as it contains no remarks relative to the question in point.

As the United Committee undertake to express their opinion relative to the present despatch, they must, in the first place, declare that the constitutional affairs of Holstein and Lauenburg are essentially affairs of the Union, and the Germanic Confederation cannot permit the interference of foreign Powers.

When the Diet, in the Resolution of the 9th of July of this year, examined the proposition of mediation of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, it occurred in consequence of references then made to the Duchy of Schleswig, and it (the Diet) entertained the hope that they might succeed in solving the pending differences of a Federal as well as international nature by means of reciprocal negotiations.

This hope is wrecked, and now it has immediate reference only to the Federal condition of Holstein and Lauenburg. In this sphere the Germanic Confederation has rights and obligations, the extent and maintenance of which it cannot allow to depend either on the judgment or on the recognition of foreign Powers, or give up to foreign influence.

This fundamental principle of the entire freedom and independence of the Diet in all Federal affairs has been, especially in its application to the Holstein-Lauenburg question, up to this time acknowledged and respected by the European Powers, and every attempt to infringe on the same must appear the more serious as it is directed against the foundations of this system, on which the peace and security of Germany rest, and which form an essential condition of the balance of European power, and constitute an indispensable guarantee for the general interests and peace of Europe.

The reporting Committee might end their discussion here. Nevertheless, as they will not ignore that the despatch of Earl Russell originated from the earnest desire for a peaceful solution of the questions at issue, as it appears as if he (Earl Russell) feared the High Diet was on the point of submitting the constitutional existence of the Danish Kingdom to their own decision, the Committee considers it right to express its opinion in this respect.

It is not the Constitution of those countries belonging to the Crown of Denmark, not appertaining to the Diet, but the obligations laid upon Holstein and Lauenburg by their Sovereign, in favour of the entire Monarchy, which form the reason and object of the Federal Execution, whose aim is to protect the Federal rights of those German Duchies in regard to their rulers, and to carry out for this end the demands denoted in Earl Russell's despatch as the fundamental principle of constitutional government.

To these rights belong the rejection of an attempt on the part of the Danish Government and the Danish Parliament, either alone in such matters as appertain to the general affairs of the whole Monarchy, to make decisions in disregard of the rights and material resources of Holstein and Lauenburg, or to treat such affairs as are especially Dano-Schleswig, to the exclusion of the constitutional co-operation of these two Duchies.

In order to make this point quite clear, it is advisable to examine more narrowly the expression 'Danish Parliament.' If by it is understood the 'Danish Diet,' it is entirely permitted to it, in common with the Danish Government, to create all laws, arrangements, and measures for the actual 'Kingdom of Denmark, with the help of the material means of the same which may appear suited to its welfare, and neither the Representatives of Holstein and Lauenburg nor the Diet will interfere here, and it neither will nor can impose a veto.

If, however, by Danish Parliament is understood the 'Reichsrath' it must be recalled to mind that this has been abolished for Holstein and Lauenburg, since the General Assembly of October 2, 1855, as contrary to the Confederation, and especially it cannot be considered as an authorized organ for the general affairs of the whole Monarchy, and therefore by its decree the Constitutional concurrence of Holstein and Lauenburg cannot be secured.

In the same manner it holds good in reference to the expression 'Kingdom of Denmark,' which can only have a double meaning.

If one understands thereby the real Kingdom of Denmark, in opposition to that portion of the country which ought not, according to Treaty, to be incorporated with it, then the Germanic Confederation has never attempted to influence the Constitution and Government. Nor does it do so now. But if one understands thereby the whole of the country united under the Sceptre of the King, so it is the right and duty of the Diet, and now the task of the Federal Execution, to afford protection to that portion of country belonging to the Confederation against an infringement of its rights by the ruler.

The difficulties which oppose themselves to the solution of this task are not created by the Diet, which for many years has exerted all reasonable means for accommodation with the greatest patience. If, therefore, an European Government is made uneasy by the present position of the question, it would be desirable that it should direct its influence where the recognition of evident right is always denied.

The Diet is, at all events, not in a position, in view of the continued unlawful acts of the Royal Government of Denmark, to desist from the proceedings of Execution resolved upon, and would place itself in contravention to the principles of the Diet and all its bounden duties were it to submit an affair of internal policy such as is the Constitutional affair of the Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg to the mediation of foreign Powers.

Under these circumstances the united Committees make the proposition:—

May it please the high Diet to decide:

1. That they are not in a position to take any action upon the communication of Her Majesty's Minister of the 1st instant.

2. To request the President to communicate a copy of the decision and of the Report of the Committee in answer to the communication contained in the note of Her Britannic Majesty's Minister.

No. V.

(No. 214.) *Lord A. Loftus to Earl Russell.*

(*Received November* 3.)

Munich, October 27, 1863.

My Lord,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 16th instant, and in obedience to the instructions therein contained, I have placed in the hands of Baron Schrenk a copy of the despatch which your Lordship addressed to Her Majesty's ambassadors at Berlin and Vienna on the 27th of May last, respecting the question of Federal execution in Holstein.

I had on this, as on a previous occasion, some conversation with Baron Schrenk on the gravity of the decision of the Germanic Diet to resort to Federal execution in the German Duchies of the King of Denmark as a means of solving differences which it was rather the interest of all parties to arrange by amicable negotiation.

I pointed out to his Excellency that at the present moment, when all the Powers of Europe were so vitally interested in the maintenance of peace, when it was their constant endeavour to solve all questions of differences or disputes by means of friendly negotiation rather than by a hasty recourse to violent measures—at a moment, also, when the public mind of Germany was disquieted by internal political questions, which threatened to produce discord and disunion among the several States of the Confederation—at such a moment it was surely most impolitic to light up a war between Germany and Denmark, the consequences of which might be fatal to the general peace of Europe.

His Excellency replied that certainly no one would regret more than himself if war were to arise out of these complications, and he even admitted that the object to be gained was not commensurate with the evils which it might produce. 'But still,' said his Excellency, 'we cannot recede (nous ne pouvons pas reculer)—our honour is engaged; and if we were now to draw back, we should be disgraced in the eyes of the

German nation, and we should justly expose ourselves to the reproach of cowardice. The question,' said his Excellency, 'is one of a purely German character, and, after twelve years of patient forbearance, the German Diet can no longer submit to the delays and evasions with which its decrees have been met by the Danish Government.' The Federal execution, he added, would be easily avoided if Denmark would comply with the demands of the Diet, and if she failed to do so there was no other course open for the Diet than to proceed to a Federal execution.

I observed to his Excellency that the claims of the Confederation in Holstein and Lauenburg had been fully admitted by your Lordship. Even lately in a despatch addressed to Her Majesty's minister at Frankfort, which had appeared in the German newspapers, your Lordship had stated that had the representations of the Diet been strictly limited to those questions regarding the German Duchies in which the Diet had a legal right to interfere, Her Majesty's Government, however lamenting its interference at this particular time, could not have denied the validity of the grounds on which the Diet acted. But I must observe to his Excellency that the German Diet had not consistently held to the grounds on which it had based its original reclamations against Denmark. When in 1858 the German Duchies were eliminated from the action of the general constitution, no question was raised regarding Schleswig. But in 1861 Austria and Prussia declined to negotiate on the affairs of Holstein without comprising also those of Schleswig, and to the extension thus arbitrarily given to the questions at issue between Germany and Denmark the present unfortunate complications were now owing.

Baron Schrenk could not deny the truth of my observation, and expressed a regret that the questions relating to the German Duchies, which were of a purely German nature, should have been mixed up with the question of Schleswig, which he admitted to be one of an international character. But in making this distinction his Excellency observed that promises

had been given by the King of Denmark in 1851 and 1852 to Germany, the due fulfilment of which Germany was entitled to claim.

Baron Schrenk stated that a Federal execution, which after all was but the carrying out of a judicial sentence, ought not to be viewed as an act of war, nor should it lead to war. If Denmark should unhappily proceed to hostilities, the responsibility of such a course would lie wholly with her.

I replied to his Excellency that it was all very well to talk of a military occupation of the German Duchies as the mere execution of a judicial sentence, and not as an act of hostility. It would, I observed, be very easy for the German troops to enter the Duchies, but would it be so easy for them to withdraw? Denmark may retort by measures of reprisal and blockade very injurious to German commerce, which would give rise to much exasperation, and the quarrel thus envenomed would assume larger and more dangerous proportions. If hostilities were continued, who could say to what extent they might be driven, and if the integrity and independence of the Danish monarchy should be thereby menaced, the engagements taken in the treaty of 1852 by Great Britain and France, as well as by Austria and Prussia, would be called into vigour. Thus fresh complications would arise which might cause serious disturbance to the peaceful relations of the Powers of Europe. On these grounds, therefore, and in the interest of Germany as well as of Europe, I again appealed to his Excellency to use his influence, both at Berlin and Vienna, with a view to a postponement of the Federal execution, in the hope that through peaceful negotiation the legal demands of the Diet may be satisfied without resorting to a measure which would be fraught with danger to the general peace.

His Excellency, however, declined taking any steps in the above sense, and declared with more than his usual animation that unless Denmark yielded to the demand of the Diet by withdrawing the ordonnance of the 30th of March, the Diet must carry out the Federal execution at whatsoever risk or peril. Germany, his Excellency said, could not now recede

from the decision it had taken without incurring dishonour and discredit both in the eyes of Europe and of the German nation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

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No. VI.

(No. 579.) *Earl Russell to Sir A. Malet.**

Foreign Office, December 31, 1863.

Sir,—The events which have taken place since the death of the late King of Denmark have given Her Majesty's Government the deepest concern.

At first, indeed, appearances bore a promising aspect. The successor of Frederick VII. was generally acknowledged no less in Holstein, Lauenburg, and Schleswig than in the kingdom of Denmark. Some of the judges and professors in Holstein indeed refused the oath of allegiance, but tranquillity and obedience universally prevailed. This internal acquiescence was followed by recognition by France, Great Britain, Russia, and Sweden.

In Germany, however, a very different spirit prevailed. Some of the Sovereigns and States who had acceded to the Treaty of London were among the most forward in abetting the claims of the Prince of Augustenburg to succeed to the sovereignty of the Duchies of Holstein and Schleswig.

The two Great Powers of Germany, Austria and Prussia, pursued a more moderate course. They did not entirely repudiate the title of Christian IX. to succeed to all the dominions of Frederick VII. in accordance with the provisions of the Treaty of London. But they made their recognition of his title so to succeed dependent on the fulfilment by the King of engagements taken by his predecessor in 1851–52.

* Similar despatches were addressed to Lord Cowley, Lord B'oomfield, Sir A. Buchanan, Lord A. Loftus, Mr. Murray, Mr. Gordon, Lord Napier, and Mr. Jerningham.

Her Majesty's Government could not assent to either of the views here described. They could not admit any claim of the Prince of Augustenburg in contradiction to the engagements Her Majesty had contracted by the Treaty of London of 1852. They considered that the King of Denmark was bound to fulfil the engagements of 1851–52; but they did not consider that his title to the Crown was dependent in any way on the fulfilment of those engagements.

Her Majesty's Government, therefore, while they readily acknowledged the succession of Christian IX., urged upon him, in conjunction with France and Russia, the performance of all the engagements of his Crown towards Germany.

They could not doubt the disposition of the King to fulfil, as far as it was possible, those engagements. He was born a German Prince, and his natural inclination to treat his German with the same liberality as his Danish subjects could not be called in question. Whatever cause of complaint may have thus arisen from the Danish partialities of the ministers of the late King, it was thought that those causes would in all probability be removed by the equal treatment and the impartial conduct of the new sovereign.

Unfortunately, two obstacles were interposed to such an arrangement as the lovers of peace would have desired. The one was the Constitution of Denmark-Schleswig, voted in November last by the Rigsraad at Copenhagen; the other the disposition of Germany.

The new constitution of Denmark appears to Her Majesty's Government to amount to an incorporation of Schleswig, and, as such, to be at variance with the engagements of the Crown of Denmark.

Indeed, the defence of the Danish ministers on this point is very unsatisfactory. But the arguments urged by M. Hall on the second point, namely, the present disposition of Germany, are very weighty.

His arguments may be put thus:—Denmark has revoked the royal patent of last March for Holstein; she has submitted peaceably to the Federal execution in Holstein, although

she considers it without justification in Federal law. She is now asked to revoke the constitution recently made for Denmark and Schleswig. But what security can she have that this will be the last concession demanded from her? Already a new constitution for Schleswig and a common constitution for the monarchy are shadowed forth as the grounds on which new demands and fresh requirements are hereafter to be founded. When can Denmark hope for repose from these incessant claims? If her independence is to be maintained, she had better resist now than consent to be weakened by constant but unavailing concessions.

Although, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, M. Hall took his stand on a wrong point, yet in his general reasoning there is much truth. Denmark has a right to know the limits of the demands of Germany, and to be able to bring to a close this long and wearisome dispute.

Whether Denmark has for eleven years evaded her obligations, or whether Germany has during the same time harassed Denmark with untenable and impracticable demands, it is time that an end should be put to this controversy.

The Powers who signed the Treaty of London are, with the Diet of Frankfort, the Powers who are best qualified to fix the terms and conditions of a final arrangement.

Her Majesty's Government therefore ask, in the interests of peace—

1. That a Conference of the Powers who signed the Treaty of London, together with a Minister of the German Diet, should sit in London or in Paris, to treat of the differences between Germany and Denmark.

2. That until such Conference shall have finished its labours the *status quo* shall be maintained.

Thus much Her Majesty's Government consider themselves entitled to ask in behalf of the peace of Europe. They are not interested for Denmark otherwise than as one of the independent monarchies of Europe; but they are interested for European peace. They therefore entreat the Sovereigns and their Cabinets to consider how difficult it may be to compose

differences once delivered over to the bloody arbitrament of war. Who shall say how far such a war may extend; what aspirations it may excite; what regions may be visited by its devastations?

It matters comparatively little in itself whether a Prince of the House of Glücksburg or a Prince of the House of Augustenburg should reign in Holstein or in Schleswig. Under either Prince the liberties and privileges of his subjects may be adequately secured. But it matters much that the faith of treaties should be maintained, that right and possession should be respected, and that the flames of war should not be spread over Europe by questions which a calm and timely exercise of justice and reason might bring to a peaceful solution.

You may give a copy of this despatch to the President of the Diet.

I am, &c.

(Signed) RUSSELL.

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No. VII.

*The Austro-Prussian Motion made in the Germanic Diet relative to Schleswig.*

(*Translation.*)

By its resolution of the 9th of July of this year, the high Federal Assembly has already asserted that the Royal Danish Government, by the proclamation of the 30th of March, 1863, has acted contrary to the obligation which it has contracted not to incorporate the Duchy of Schleswig with the kingdom of Denmark, properly so called, and to take no step tending to that end. The Federal Assembly has reserved to itself, in case Denmark should persist in that violation of law, to have recourse to all the means proper for asserting the rights which belong to the Confederation, as far as concerns Schleswig, in virtue of an arrangement based on international law.

The Court of Copenhagen has, it is true, abrogated the said ordinance. But this has only taken place after that ordinance

had attained its end, and a new fundamental law had been promulgated for Denmark and Schleswig, which law is virtually equivalent to an incorporation of the Duchy in the kingdom. That fundamental law was sanctioned on the 18th of November by the King of Denmark, although the German Powers had energetically dissuaded him from this step, and an electoral law in conformity with the tenour of the fundamental law has just been promulgated in Schleswig, and the 1st of January, 1864, is the date fixed for putting in force this new constitution.

According to the opinion of the Governments of Austria and Prussia, the Royal Danish Government, by this illegal course, forces the Germanic Confederation to employ, in conformity with the reserve mentioned above, the means which are at its disposal in order properly to assert the rights which belong to it relatively to Holstein, as towards the Crown of Denmark, that is to say, in virtue of international law.

In consequence Austria and Prussia propose :—

That the high Federal Assembly be pleased to summon the Royal Danish Government not to put in force, as regards the Duchy of Schleswig, the fundamental law of the 18th of November of that year, but to abrogate that law definitively, and that the Diet be pleased to declare, while expressing that desire, that in case of refusal on the part of Denmark, the Germanic Confederation, with a view to its right and dignity, will be obliged to take the measures necessary for procuring, by means of the military occupation of the Duchy of Schleswig, a guarantee for the accomplishment of its legitimate desires.

It need not be said that the adoption of the aforesaid motion can in no way prejudice the reserve made on the occasion of the vote of the 7th of December of the Germanic Diet, with regard to the normal examination of the question of succession.

The envoys of Austria and Prussia are instructed lastly to present this motion :—

That the high Federal Assembly be pleased to instruct the military commission immediately to propose the necessary measures for the purpose of raising to the proper number the

effective forces which should be placed at the service of the Confederation for the eventual occupation of the Duchy of Schleswig.

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No. VIII.

(No. 843.) *Earl Russell to Earl Cowley.*

(*Extract.*)

Foreign Office, January 30, 1864.

The ambassador of France came to the Foreign Office on the 28th instant, and stated to me the contents of a despatch he had received from M. Drouyn de Lhuys on the subject of material aid to be afforded to Denmark in certain cases.

M. Drouyn de Lhuys, after recapitulating the substance of my despatch of the 24th of January to your Excellency, explains very clearly the views of the French Government upon the subject. The Emperor recognises the value of the London treaty as tending to preserve the balance of power and maintain the peace of Europe. But the Government of France, while paying a just tribute to the purport and objects of the treaty of 1852, is ready to admit that circumstances may require its modification.

The Emperor has always been disposed to pay great regard to the feelings and aspirations of nationalities. It is not to be denied that the national feelings and aspirations of Germany tend to a closer connection with the Germans of Holstein and of Schleswig. The Emperor would feel repugnance to any course which should bind him to oppose in arms the wishes of Germany.

It may be comparatively easy for England to carry on a war which can never go beyond maritime operations of blockade and capture of ships. Schleswig and England are far apart from each other. But the soil of Germany touches the soil of France, and a war between France and Germany would be one of the most burthensome and one of the most hazardous in which the French Empire could engage.

Besides these considerations, the Emperor cannot fail to recollect that he has been made an object of mistrust and suspicion in Europe on account of his supposed projects of aggrandisement on the Rhine. A war commenced on the frontiers of Germany could not fail to give strength to these unfounded and unwarrantable imputations.

For these reasons the Government of the Emperor will not take at present any engagement on the subject of Denmark. If, hereafter, the balance of power should be seriously threatened, the Emperor may be inclined to take new measures in the interest of France and of Europe.

But for the present the Emperor reserves to his Government entire liberty.

I did not interrupt the statement of the ambassador or controvert the reasoning of the despatch. I confined myself to an endeavour to ascertain clearly the position of the French Government.

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No. IX.

*Colonel Dammers' Statement.*

(*Translation. Extract.*)

Let us consider what passed. The Duke's efforts to obtain a stoppage of operations I always and decidedly declined. His Highness came upstairs to the room in which I was, whilst, cap in hand, I was preparing to depart. I considered myself dismissed, and only remained behind the Duke for the purpose of ordering Major v. Jacobi to conduct the expected Prussian adjutant-general by way of Langensalza to the King, so that our intended operation on Eisenach might not be betrayed to the enemy, and of directing him only to receive any communication from Berlin *ad referendum*.

When, following the Duke, I came downstairs to get into the carriage—M. de Seebach (or some one else) came up, and asked if I would not present myself to the Duke, as his Highness was in the room below, waiting to see me. [This is the

audience of leave referred to in page 41 of M. de Seebach's pamphlet.]

I did not wish to see his Highness again. [Page 40 of M. de Seebach's pamphlet informs us that this was his own suggestion, and of the reason why. Compare M. de Seebach's inferences with the Duke's telegram to Berlin.] I was now importuned to stay hostilities. The enemy's admissions prove clearly enough that I refused to enter into any arrangement of the kind; for they allow that I made reflections, first, as to the time of the arrival of the adjutant-general, and, secondly, as to bringing up more troops. There were, however, still weightier motives, the chief of which was His Majesty's resolution to continue operations. &c. &c.

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No. X.

*Extract from the Report of the Sitting of the Diet of November* 21, 1863.

(*Translation.*)

*Denmark in re Holstein and Lauenburg.*—The envoy must, in the name of his Government, protest in the most decided manner against every claim of members of the ducal line of Augustenburg to succession to the Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg as completely unfounded, nor can he omit to add how, in order to provide against all possible future pretensions of the sort, Duke Christian Augustus of Augustenburg gave assurances to the Danish Government, in a document of the 30th of December, 1852, of which Articles 2 and 3 are as follows:—

'2. Moreover we engage, for our person and our family, not only for the future to take up our abode without the dominions and country of His Majesty, in which it is self-understood we and our successors neither can nor will acquire any landed property; but we

'3. Vow and promise, besides, for ourselves and our family,

on our princely word and honour, to undertake nothing calculated to disturb or endanger the peace in His Majesty's dominions. Likewise we engage ourselves in no way to oppose any present or future resolutions of His Majesty regulating the succession to all countries now united under his sceptre, or the eventual organisation of His Majesty's monarchy.'

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No. XI.

After the war General v. der Tann brought an action for libel at Munich against Dr. Lander, who, as a journalist, had accused him of treacherous conduct in his post, as chief of the staff, during the war. Dr. Lander was unanimously acquitted.

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No. XII. (*to page* 383).

The sums allowed by Prussia to the deposed Sovereigns are understated in the text. To the King of Hanover was assigned, by Treaty dated 29th of September 1867, the capital sum of 16,000,000 (sixteen million) thalers, equal to about 2,500,000*l.* sterling.

The Treaty with the Duke of Nassau, dated the 18th of September 1867, assigned to the Duke not quite 9,000,000 (nine million) thalers, equal to about 1,300,000*l.* sterling.

The Elector of Hesse signed a Treaty while still under duresse at Stettin, on the 17th of September 1866. By this arrangement, H.R.H. was to receive nine hundred thousand thalers a-year, representing a capital of eight million thalers, about 1,200,000*l.* sterling.

This information only reached the Author after his work was in the press.

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